

COUNTRY LIFE

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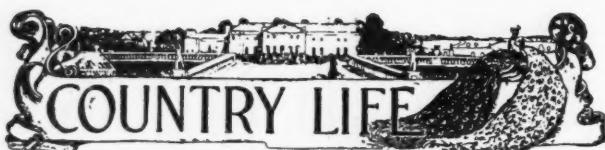
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LADY SUSAN SUTTON AND HER DAUGHTERS.

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COUNTRY LIFE
THE Journal for all interested in
Country Life and Country Pursuits

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RURAL ENGLAND.

A CURSORY glance at the two portly volumes on rural England which Mr. Rider Haggard has written, and the Messrs. Longmans have published, induces one to cast a retrospective eye over the many preceding efforts of the same kind. The difference that strikes one first is the great calm that has come over the world of field and furrow. When Arthur Young, the forerunner and king of all preceding Commissioners, made his celebrated tour, a great deal of England was still cultivated on the open-field system, and the yeoman continued to be an important person. Looked at closely, he was not perhaps a very engaging figure. He commanded very little capital, and had none, or very little, to spend on repairs. Usually his house was thatched, and looked cosy and comfortable to those who passed it from the engaging distance of the main road, but the roof was chronically in need of repair and the mud walls were crumbling. His out-buildings were few and inadequate, and the dirty horse-pond was inhabited chiefly by ducks and geese. The general effect was rather squalid; but the yeoman, though an uncouth personage, was burly and independent, and when the proper perspective was obtained it could be seen that he was, in more than a form of words, a pillar of the State. As long as wastes were not enclosed he was able to hold his own, the right of free pasture eking out the profits of his garth and steading. Mr. Rider Haggard discerns how useful was the place he filled, but a slight examination seems to show that he has not followed up the history of the yeoman. A more careful study may possibly show that we do him injustice, but as far as we remember in the newspaper articles which form the basis of this book no attempt was made to elucidate the very close connection that exists between the old manorial system, the yeoman, the enclosure acts, and the subsequent tinkering with allotments and small holdings. No reasonable doubt can exist, however, that herein lies the key to a great deal of the economical and agricultural history of the shires. But perhaps Mr. Haggard very reasonably

came to the conclusion that this was a study for the closet rather than the open. The average farmer is there, but how he came to be there he is the last to know.

The next to make a pilgrimage that became historic through the country was William Cobbett, whose "Rural Rides" still remains a pleasant and instructive book to read. Cobbett, of course, was an out-and-out partisan. He was emphatically of the people, and had been trained to labour almost from infancy. With the labouring man therefore were all his sympathies, though none ever cast a shrewder eye over the cornfields and roots and pastures through which he passed. Our late author describes how he went by train and motor-car and bicycle and on foot, but much can still be said for Cobbett's style of pilgrimage. If one had to spend the greater part of a spring and summer traversing the English lanes and examining the English homesteads, the back of a good nag still remains the pleasantest seat for travel. To read Cobbett, however, is to realise what a vast change for the better has come over rural England. Mr. Haggard, in showing how the labour bill of recent years contrasts in bulk with the slender expenditure on that item which used to prevail, unconsciously pays a tribute to Cobbett. No doubt the latter often failed to discern the true causes of the wretchedness that was only too visible. He hated paper money and the old poor law and the talk of "chopstick," but he lived too much in the heart of his time to see it with the detachment which brings the parts into true proportion. Some of the abuses of the day he had grown up amongst, and did not recognise them as abuses. For instance, it was left to the generation of Charles Kingsley to begin and carry on the energetic crusade against overcrowding that scarcely yet has gained its end. Still, the vigour of Cobbett, his energetic idiomatic English, and his fearless exposure of all he thought unjust, entitle him to a respect he did not always win from his contemporaries. The peasant did not receive any immediate benefit, and for many years he nursed his wrath in gloomy silence, no one heeding till the red glow of burning ricks proclaimed the rude manner in which he was asserting his right to live. That was his inarticulate way of calling attention to his wrongs; it was, as Mr. Gladstone used to say of later outrages in the sister island, "the tolling of the chapel bell."

Making another great jump, we come to the days of Mr. Joseph Arch. Once more the soul of rural England was stirred with wrath. All these matters appear to have settled down now, and it is difficult to realise that a quarter of a century ago the great question on which English parties were divided was the land. No political candidate would have dreamed of sending out an address that did not contain some reference to it. The reputation of Radicals largely depended on the lengths to which they would go in it. This lasted till some time after the beginning of the great depression, and indeed the first effect of the sufferings of 1879 and the subsequent years was to quicken the general dissatisfaction. At dusk the discontented labourers used to slip away by field and lane to some lone public-house where the orators of their class addressed them, using a cart or waggon as a platform. But continued depression has had the effect of a chilling frost, and just now the old controversy is quite dead. Imperial questions, to quote another Gladstonian phrase, "hold the field." Whether the dead or dying horse can be flogged into life again is a difficult question to answer. One cannot help feeling doubtful at least about the success of Mr. Rider Haggard. He is at a disadvantage compared with fore-runners like Arch and Cobbett, inasmuch as he has no popular cry. As he is himself a landowner and a farmer, what he naturally is most anxious about is to see these two callings become more remunerative than they have been in the immediate past. Such objects are in no respect blameworthy, but it is doubtful if they are attainable by argument and rhetoric. Probably the best means of reviving English agriculture at the present moment ought to be severely practical in form. To adopt motor power for farm work, to popularise the keeping of pedigree stock, to train young people to better methods of farm and dairy work—in homely tasks like these lies the field of the reformer of to-day. For anything else sufficient excitement has not been generated, and excitement is to great movements what coal is to the steam-engine. Nor is the state of things altogether to be regretted. England has had enough of agitation and rick-burning in the past, and may be thankful for the tranquillity of the present.

Our Portrait Illustration.

THIS week our frontispiece is a group of Lady Susan Sutton and her daughters. Lady Susan, who is the daughter of the fourth Earl of Harewood, married Francis Richard Hugh Seymour Sutton, Esq. Their country seat is Fenton Lodge, Andover. By a regrettable error it was stated that our frontispiece for last week, a portrait of Lady Emily Lutyens, was from a photograph by Miss Alice Hughes, whereas the photographer was Richard N. Speaight.



MR. CHAMBERLAIN, as now appears, brought General Botha sharply to account for the damaging statements made in the notorious appeal to the civilised world. The Colonial Secretary deals with the matter in an extremely clear and businesslike manner. He reminds Botha that the grant of £3,000,000 is "without any precedent in the history of the world." To that his antagonist could make no satisfactory reply. We cannot here go over every item in the correspondence, but most effectively does Mr. Chamberlain point out that those who now pose as beggars remitted large sums to Europe during the war, and in his direct way he says there is no doubt that a large balance still remains, and with an unavoidable touch of sarcasm he proposes that it should be added to the fund for the relief of distressed burghers. The reply of General Botha was that no such sums came under his own personal observation or control, which appears to be only an easy means of getting out. It is not evident, however, that much good will come from these dialectical encounters, except, indeed, what is of moral value as showing that the Boers have been making what is called in the North "a very poor mouth." Mr. Kruger, in his memoirs, is careful to shuffle over the financial history, and that is typical of the Boer methods and attitude.

A very noticeable figure in the obituary of this week is that of Herr Krupp, the great ironmaster and maker of big guns. He is said to have been the richest man in Germany, and it seems very appropriate that the most military nation should have had for its wealthiest citizen one who excelled in fashioning the most deadly implements of war. It may be said he was cut off in the prime of his life, since he was born in 1854, and he was the third of the name. Probably his grandfather, who founded the great business, was the cleverest of the line, although he seems to have experienced some difficulty in making his inventive genius available. Some of his talent descended to his son, however, who built up the great business into which the grandson entered in 1887. The German Emperor has sent a message of sympathy, and well he might, since the strength of his armies depends so much on the capacity of this brilliant engineer, who held in Germany a position akin to that of the late Lord Armstrong in this country.

The death of a very different individual has to be chronicled in the person of Commissioner Kerr, who, at the ripe age of four score and one, passed away at the opening of the week. Shrewd, able, kind, full of "kick" and temper, he might have walked straight out of a novelist's imagination. His strong common-sense will long remain enshrined in his sayings, many of which had the wit and concentration of proverbs; but surely it was an equally famous Scots Divine who first made one epigram attributed to him, viz., "King David said in his haste all men are liars. If he had been here as I have for forty years, he would have said it at his leisure." Probably the memory of a good story lurked in his mind as he made this utterance. But how keen is this, "Men who have not any money always go about well-dressed. They cannot afford to dress shabbily," or this, "Never sign a hire-purchase agreement. They are generally snares and delusions. In fact, never sign anything for the rest of your life." No doubt the racial "wut" of the Scot is apparent here, but it is sharpened and brightened by the London air, that air without which no intellect seems to ripen properly.

There were not many absentees at the dinner of the contributors to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* to whom invitations were sent out by Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace. Indeed, the crush was quite extraordinary, and some were inclined to count by thousands rather than hundreds, though, as a matter of fact, a little over 500 guests sat down to dinner. The speeches were

remarkably interesting. Viscount Peel, whose fine antique face was once so familiar to the House of Commons, spoke with fire and patriotism; and Mr. Gully, who now occupies the Speaker's chair, was bright and amusing. Lord Selborne made great fun out of the poet who so assiduously sends his verse to the Admiralty; and the Prime Minister, who looked in excellent health and spirits, was more than usually speculative and ingenious. Not so long ago he said, in effect, a single head could carry all the knowledge in the world; now only a small fraction is possible, and how much smaller will it be ere the twentieth edition comes out? And so he etched in a clever picture of what may be and is likely to be in the years when we and ours are dumb.

Of the motor-car much has been prophesied, and the prophecies, like most sayings of the kind, are in the way of coming partly true. First of all it was to replace the horse, and mechanical power is to some extent doing that in towns like Glasgow, where the construction of electrical car lines has thrown so many of our four-footed friends out of employment. In London from time to time attempts have been made to substitute motor for horse traction, but so far without any perceptible result. But, to use a hack business phrase, the matter is receiving attention. Many people see that a workable motor omnibus running not only in London, but to and beyond the distant suburbs, would have before it a good enough future to attract capital. It would in many respects be more convenient than any existing contrivance, including the tube and the underground, as well as the horse omnibus. In agriculture the motor is being steadily pushed to the front, and may confidently be expected to "arrive" one of these fine days. All the same, we do not believe that it will seriously affect the demand for horses, since there will always be work enough for them. At all events, no one can say that the motor has yet affected the value of horse-flesh.

Indirectly the motor is exercising a considerable effect on inns, which but for its invention might have gone idle altogether. Many, in fact, have had to be shut up during the last few years. Country houses are also likely to be affected. In fact, there is already a disposition to make less of the big house, hall, or mansion, and, as a contemporary says, even rich men prefer a simple *pied à terre* where they can rest themselves quietly on a week-end to the pomp and state we have so long associated with great country houses. This feeling will probably grow with the extending use of the motor-car, since it has become so easy to get a considerable distance on, say, a Friday afternoon, and the rest from then till Monday is one certain to be more appreciated because the bustle of life always tends to grow more active.

To prophesy about English weather is usually a very futile proceeding, but it is a very different matter reading the very plain signs. When, for example, the Continent is swept by a storm, we in these islands may feel glad if we escape with a brush from the tail of it. The fearfully hard weather encountered in Paris and Berlin most likely heralds to us an approach of winter in earnest, and, indeed, we have already had a taste of the hard frost. Round Berlin, however, the lakes are frozen, and some are open for skating. The humane aspect of the matter is that industry has been having a bad time in Germany just now, and any long spell of cold would be a misfortune indeed to the increasing hosts of unemployed. In Paris a heavy fall of snow has been experienced, and if we are visited in like manner soon there will be no ground for surprise. Great Britain for several years past has been lucky to get off with extremely mild winters, so that according to the doctrine of chances a severe season is now due; and, at any rate, meteorological history shows that a moist, unpleasant summer is usually followed by a long and stormy winter, so it is to be feared that is what we must prepare for.

Douglas Bay in the Isle of Man seems to have been surprised, one day lately, when a flock of geese swam ashore from the open sea. It was a day of wild and cold east wind, and for a while it seemed to the Manxmen that this was a visit of some wild geese frozen out from the Cattegat or some of those places where these wintry birds like to live. But the case was in point of fact rather more curious still, for inspection showed that these were geese of the domesticated breed, and it was conjectured that they had been washed overboard from some ship. The birds appeared very weary, as if they had had a long swim and a severe buffeting in the stormy sea.

Electioneering in Orkney and Shetland, of which the latest result will be known by the time this is in the press, is not carried on without a difficulty and at times a danger that are rather reminiscent of Dr. Johnson in the Hebrides as personally

conducted by Boswell, or Bonnie Prince Charlie by Miss Flora Macdonald. The candidate for election has to brave many perils by sea as he goes from one island to another, and often he is cut off and storm-stayed from the place where he was due to speak. The inhabitants of these happy islands are too well used to delay thus occasioned to be greatly disturbed thereby. At the time of the deferred Coronation we all, in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, were sadly put about because we received our telegrams a few hours late. In Shetland the people are too grateful for the reception of news at all to grumble or to wonder at its delay, and as a matter of fact Shetland did not hear of the delay in the Coronation until after the date for which it was fixed originally, and actually carried through all the festivities appropriate to the occasion (as the Shetlanders naturally conceived it) while the rest of Great Britain was in a fearful anxiety for the life of His Majesty who was not yet crowned.

It is not surprising to find that the hard case of the man Gardiner, concerning whose guilt or innocence, in connection with the death of Rose Harsent, the jury were unable to agree, has roused a great deal of public sympathy. In using the expression hard case, there is no intention of expressing any opinion upon the cardinal issue between the Crown and the prisoner. Indeed, we have no opinion to express. The hardship is that, after one abortive trial, Gardiner should be compelled to wait until the next Suffolk Assizes, a period of some months, before his anxiety can be ended in one way or another. A contemporary has gone to the length of consulting on the subject "one of the best-known and most eminent legal men in the country, an ex-Judge of the High Court"—the last phrase should tend to identification, at any rate—and the ex-Judge is strongly of opinion that in all such cases (except those in which further evidence can be obtained) "retrial ought to be immediate." We entirely agree with this view, and we would go so far as to eliminate the exception, unless indeed a request for delay should be made on behalf of the accused. It is the duty of the prosecution to be ready, and they have ample means at their disposal. The thought of a man languishing in gaol on a capital charge for several months, knowing that the prosecution may be hunting up fresh evidence against him—knowing also that he had a narrow escape at his first trial—is too horrible to contemplate; yet it is precisely the position of the man Gardiner.

At the Assizes for the County of Gloucester, a medical man caused much amusement by informing the Court that he had himself lent to the prisoner (who was acquitted of a charge of forging a will) a form of will which he habitually carried in his pocket for use when required. There was, of course, something to laugh at, for the habit provoked the suggestion that the patient who called in that doctor would be well advised to make his will at once, and that the doctor himself knew this. But there is a serious side too. Only the accumulated memories of medical men could tell the world how often at the last moment they have intervened to persuade a dying man not to work injustice, or to prevent the hideous inconvenience of intestacy. Sometimes they have suffered grievously for their friendliness. One case is known to us of a doctor who urged a dying man not to leave an absolutely cruel testament behind him. His patient assented subject to the condition that the doctor would be a trustee. The doctor acquiesced if Mr. P— (naming a well-known solicitor) were his co-trustee. The patient died. Mr. P— absconded with the money and about half a million besides, and the Court held the doctor liable for breach of trust. Yet Mr. P— had actually shown to the doctor a deed, really a forgery, purporting to represent a mortgage investment of the trust money. That doctor has not again interfered to prevent injustice by dying men.

It is prophesied with assurance that the Board of Trade will introduce next session a Bill to create a Commission to be the one authority controlling the Port of London, from Teddington Lock to Havengore Creek and Warden Point, that is to say, all the river and its estuary below the lock. That is as it should be. A port in the regulation of which the Trinity House, Thames Conservators, London and other County Councils, dock-owners of many distinct docks, and multitudinous wharfingers have a share, cannot be, and in fact is not, governed at all. That is the reason, or a part of the reason, why the out-ports have thriven while London has gone back. To compare the work done by trusts or commissions on the Clyde, Mersey, and Tyne, or by simply-organised authorities on the Bristol Channel or at Southampton, with the work which has not been done on the tidal Thames is to learn a lesson which London has been all too long in learning. For the constitution of the Commission we care little. The one thing essential to the prosperity of the Port of London is that it should be controlled by a single and a simply-constituted body.

Is there really, and at last, any hope that there may be some settlement of the Irish land question? Almost it seems that there may be. Lords Dunraven and Mayo, polling some 4,000 landlords on the proposed conference, have received favourable answers from 1,100, adverse replies from 575, and no response from the balance. At the same moment Mr. W. O'Brien, detested by Irish landlords as the originator of the Plan of Campaign, and ridiculed as the founder of New Tipperary, is in bad odour. He has been reproved publicly—or the *Freeman* has, which comes to the same thing—by Archbishop Walsh for his comments on the summing-up of the Chief Baron in the Tallow case, and signs are not wanting that Mr. T. Healy and the *Independent* are willing to throw him and the League to the dogs. If conference there be, then, the most powerful factor of discord will be absent; and conference, at worst, can do no harm. It may even do good, but no scheme that can be evolved now can do complete justice. The fact is that the history of Irish land legislation is that of an attempt to set the laws of political economy at defiance. They were "banished to Saturn"; but they did not go. In an entirely artificial society they continued to exercise their influence. All that can be said is that if a purchase scheme could be carried out universally, and the new owners left to their own resources, there might be some hope for Ireland.

The "tone reflector" is the latest of American "musical" inventions. It is a light shell-shaped wooden lid. "By means of this improvement the resonance of the instrument is more than doubled, and the tones of single notes or chords can be sustained for a much longer time than has hitherto been possible." In short, a semi-grand makes as much noise as a full-sized concert grand, and a concert grand rivals an orchestra. The prospect is, really, appalling, especially for the unfortunate Londoner. As matters stand most good houses are tolerably piano-proof, so that one need not hear one's neighbour's music. But this abominable inventor has spoiled all this. He is in the position of the inventor of a shell, pointed in some new way, propelled by an unknown explosive, which is warranted to pierce the stoutest and toughest steel plating that has been applied to any man-of-war. A proper sentence upon him would be confinement within a small and resonant room while a strong pianist, or a robust man with a pianola, played him to death or lunacy with a "tone reflector" attached to a concert grand. It would be worth while, too, to have a phonograph close to the inventor and victim.

THE FOG.

White, thin, and cold, noiseless as water flowing,
When pebbles do not fret it into sound,
The fog falls over London, coming, going,
Muffling all footsteps on the sodden ground.

Earth wraps herself in mists, the sky is hidden,
Lumps hardly hint us where the houses are,
The sun is lost to us, the moon forbidden,
Nor can this dusk be pierced by any star.

Voices of men that pass sound faint and muffled,
As if they called to us from far away;
The tide of life that flowed so long unruffled
Along the sounding streets stagnates to-day.

Life swings becalmed, at anchor, overtaken
By some strange sleep-spell at the height of noon.
Time's glass runs through, and if the sands are shaken
We know not, seeing neither night nor noon.

NORA CHESSON.

One peculiar feature that has been witnessed in agricultural circles this year, especially in the North, is the almost unprecedented giving up of farms. A period could hardly be recalled in which the market was so flooded with vacant holdings. In one district, where the average letting is about six farms annually, the number has mounted this year to upwards of forty. Two bad seasons in succession have proved a great strain on the farmers, and where, as in many cases, an increased rental had to be faced, the matter has become serious and the farmer been forced to leave. Curiously enough, the new tenants of most of these farms are not farmers, but butchers, who, in view of the decreased returns on cattle-feeding farms, owing to the American trading, have decided to rear their own stock. The attempt seems to have been very successful so far, many butchers in small country towns have as many as three or four farms on hand.

The accounts of the various meetings of County Cricket Clubs make rather doleful reading. In almost every case the tale is the same, of decreased receipts, and in only too many cases it is a tale of receipts that are less than the outgoings. Of course, this is no matter for surprise. It would be surprising if the position were otherwise. Matches have been abandoned,

half finished, or never have been begun, again and again, in consequence of the evil weather of the so-called summer; and yet more matches have been played in weather that did not tempt spectators to pay shillings or sixpences for the privilege of sitting out and looking on at a game of cricket played on a mud wicket. Jupiter Pluvius is an ill god for the cricketer, from the financial as well as from all other points of view. The national game needs sunshine.

The Crofters' Commission has just issued a report to the Secretary of State for Scotland, in reference to the condition of the island of Lewis as compared with its state twenty years ago. The report, which goes into historical accounts of how the Normans came a-Viking, and took possession, is in parts quite romantic reading. What is immediately interesting and satisfactory is that there has been a very great increase in the population of the island during the twenty years under review, and that the condition of the population generally has much improved. On the other hand, the Commission points out peculiar dangers to which the island is exposed, as of epidemic and of famine in bad years. The crofts, as elsewhere in Scotland, that once sufficed for the maintenance of the holders, have been subdivided, by a succession that is analogous to that of gavelkind, until they

are too small to support those who are supposed to live on them. In other cases, squatters who have no legal right at all have come to share the common pastures and rights of the township pasture, apparently without opposition. The Commission gives a strictly guarded approval to the suggestion of increasing the supporting power of the crofts by taking bits from the adjacent farms and deer forests.

Just at present there are some very curious anomalies about the price of hay. In the first place the price of the old hay is keeping wonderfully high, considering what a deal of new hay there is in the country, farmers thinking, no doubt, that people do not care to use their new hay just yet, and that they may still get something like famine prices; and at the same time there is much of this new hay, that really is nearly worthless, to be bought at very little more than its real, negative, worth. The explanation of the last fact is that some of the hay was saved only after it had been lying out for a long while in the rain, owing to the delay caused by the weather, combined with the heaviness of the general crop, which made such a demand on labour. It is very poor stuff and has little nutritious virtue. Still it is hay, of a sort, and between this and the good and scarce old hay prices are ranging bewilderingly.

SCOTTISH FISHER-GIRLS.

AT certain seasons of the year, following the example of the great grey gull and of her father's brown-sailed fishing smack, the Scottish fisher-girl starts on an annual migration after the herring. When the boats, laden with brown nets and blue-jerseyed, oil-skinned fishermen, have left the Northern quays amidst a waving of shawls, handkerchiefs, and long good-byes, the girls return home to pack their modest hoses, and start shortly for the same destination as their brothers by the more prosaic train. As many as three or four thousand girls will be landed at Yarmouth and other fishing centres within a few days. Most of these are brought by special trains from Aberdeen, Wick, Peterborough, and other fishing centres, but some of the girls picked up will have travelled already from the Shetlands and small islands of the far North. The occupation of the fisher-girl at this time is hardly an attractive one, nor does it lend itself to a picturesque rendering. To be found in the



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FISHING-BOATS OFF YARMOUTH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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LANDING THE HERRINGS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

graceful attitudes in which the fisher-girl is seen at her best, she must be sought at home earlier or later in the year, digging bait along the bleak windy shore, or striding, sure-footed, with hands on her sides and basket slung across her shoulders, over the slippery rocks beside the sea. The herring, however, is more plentiful than the white fish, and money is to be made in its wake. The work of the fisher-girl while in the South consists mainly in splitting and cleaning the herrings ready for salting and smoking, or packing them for exportation. The work must often be cold and uncongenial — she stands for long hours in shawl and apron ripping up fish at lightning speed—but it is fairly lucrative, and the few pounds she may be able to save will help materially in tiding the family over the worst part of the winter, when fish is scarce and starvation imminent. For the fisher is not by any means a provident person. "Good times and bad times and all times win over," he thinks, and does not

care to provide against any. If they are somewhat wasteful and extravagant when fish is plentiful, however, it may be said for them, on the other hand, that when they do starve none starves with a better grace. Though a daily menu of the small unmarketable crab, which is often almost the sole article of diet, may become, as the Scotsman said of cold sowans, "gey wersh," they will show no sign, except the outward and visible one of slacker jerseys and thinner jaws, perhaps, or a more hearty and prolonged damning of the trawler, whom no scientific expert will persuade them to consider as other than their most natural and proper enemy.

Besides the indirect warding off of starvation, there is another advantage, not less considered by the girls nor of less importance to them, to be gained from the yearly migration after the herring shoals. Among the populations of the fishing villages on the



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FILLING BASKETS WITH HERRINGS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

coast and in the islands, one of the greatest evils is the constant intermarriage that goes on. A fisher-girl will not marry outside the fishing persuasion if she can help it. With the state of affairs as it is, to get a man a girl must accept a husband who is kin to her in some way, and very probably of the same name. From some of the worst results of this close intermarriage the fisher-people are doubtless protected by the hardy out-of-doors life they lead. But, in spite of their healthy mode of living, consumption or weak-mindedness is the curse of many fishing villages.

The herring acts as a useful deterrent by drawing fisher lads and lasses together from all parts for a common interest. They are brought into daily contact with each other, and have opportunities of making friends outside their own village circle. The laughter and jokes passed on the quay while cleaning the nets and splitting the herring or watching the auction sales, the grave discussions over the fish, the helping hand with the baskets, all tend to bring about the desirable result of betrothals and marriages between men and women of widely different birth, and to prevent the increase of weak-minded and consumptive individuals. When the herring season is over for the year, with all its fun and possibilities, the fisher-girl goes back to work which, if more picturesque and less unpleasant in some ways, is often more severe. One of her chief occupations is gathering the bait and preparing the nets for the white fishing. The bait has to be gathered in all weathers, and the gathering is often bitter work. Sometimes she may be seen, a dark figure against the clear afternoon sky, standing knee-deep in salty pools, or among the sinking wet sand, digging for soft bait. Sometimes, in the early morning, she will appear far out on the wet rocks when the tide is

back, chipping off the shell-fish amid the spray of the sea, which dashes all around her and spreads away to where her father's boat may be seen, a tiny speck, against the grey horizon. Sometimes she bends, amongst a group, over the mussel-pit in the harbour, beside the sail-furled boats, picking out the fat mussels for her basket and throwing the lean ones back for the sea to wash over and fill. Or, when the bait is gathered, she may be caught sight of on summer evenings threading the soft-bodied bait on to the brown nets with marvellous speed, while she laughs with her sweetheart, at the cottage door. In the Shetlands, where some of the girls will now be returning, there is other work to do. The lean crops are still standing green amid the hail and sunshine of the island, and the girls will have to help in the work of getting them in. Cottages must be re-thatched for the winter, cows and sheep have to be taken to the shorn fields and allowed to graze, dykes have to be built, and winter stores got in. In all these the women help. The girl "gutting herring" now in the open by the Yarmouth quay may then be seen trudging from the shore carrying sea-weed in a creel on her back to manure the land, or at evening she may be met with striding over the moor, her knitting in her hands, her load of winter fuel silhouetted with her square set figure against the ruddy evening sky. Later in the year, when the snow lies on the moor, with fingers grown white and soft, she may be found beside the open peat fire knitting the soft white Shetland shawls and vests that come from the islands.

Her life is one that might well be considered in connection with the argument about "unwomanliness" that is going on in our correspondence columns. The work of the woman field labourer, the outworker, or bondager is light compared to that of the fisher lass, who has to go out in all weathers digging bait or hawking fish like Maggie Mucklebackit. In Crofter districts she has an agreeable relaxation in the shape of tilling the soil, and the sight there is very rare of a woman literally yoked to a plough or harrow and playing the part of a beast of burden. But even then a line is drawn between "manly" and "womanly" occupations; the girls, for example, not being permitted to go to sea with the men. There is an old nonsense saying to the effect that things which are different are not the same, and let a woman do what she may she never is exactly a man. We do not see how any question of what a correspondent calls degradation arises. A woman might not be morally a bit the worse for facing bad weather and



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SCOTCH WOMEN CLEANING THE FISH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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sea, her grey overcats, ring fill, ght on ghs, ds, is seen girls, ge ter, sen to and esing, the ean ng to le he ds, ed st the he nd the left at sell me at ce old is ver rs n of n a " g e e s a t establishment in a boat, but physically a man is more "fit." Concerning this argument would be futile, as it could not possibly change male into female. There are facts in Nature which we can do nothing but accept, and this is one of them.

THE AGRICULTURAL HANDBOOK.

EVERY year this annual publication shows an increased usefulness, and stands out better from all other publications of a similar kind. For the present issue of "The Agricultural Handbook and Diary" (Vinton), the editors, Mr. C. Adeane and Mr. Richardson Carr, have secured the work of several very prominent writers, of whom the most important is, perhaps, Sir Walter Gilbey, on the question of Remounts. He goes very thoroughly into it, showing how greatly our import of horses exceeds the export. The latter trade is illustrated by the following figures: "During the eight months from January 1st to August 30th last we exported 13,959 horses, and of these 13,110 were sent to Holland and Belgium; the average value of these 13,110 works out at little more than £11 10s. per head. In other words, a very large proportion of these are worn-out and crippled animals, sold for an outside price of three or four sovereigns, slaughtered on arrival at the port of debarkation, and turned into cheap sausages—at any rate, butchers and sausage-makers are the chief purchasers." Sir Walter makes out a feasible case for the encouragement of horse-breeding, and for the purchase by Government of three year olds, but it has two weak points. It takes no account of the fact that the number of horses alone among livestock has recently shown a tendency to increase. Interjectionally, we might point out to the editor that the diary has not sufficient information on the subject, the returns on page 61 affording no means of comparison; indeed, the statistics have not been arranged with that end in view anywhere in the volume, except it be in the table of tithe-rent charges, interesting as recording a rise in 1901, after a steady fall since 1873. The other weakness in the position of Sir Walter Gilbey is that, other things being equal, it always pays the farmer better to rear heavy horses than to trouble about light ones, since the latter eat their heads off, while the cart-horse earns his keep on the land. But his paper is very able and suggestive, even if it does call forth a certain amount of practical criticism. Mr. Adeane himself contributes to the book a valuable history of the Royal Agricultural Society from its beginning in 1838 to the

establishment of a permanent show-yard at Twyford. Some of his facts are very interesting. The first time a profit was made on the show was at Chester in 1858, and the most successful of its meetings was that at Manchester in 1869, when the profit amounted to £9,153, and the gross number of admissions to 217,980. The greatest loss was incurred at Kilburn in 1879, a fact of no good omen to the fixing of the show in London. In the course of his story Mr. Adeane makes the following remarks, which have an added value from the fact of their coming from so successful a breeder: "There does not seem to be a great field in the future for improving our breeds of horses, sheep, and cattle. Probably we have reached the highest point of quality, type, and symmetry which can be obtained." In spite of this, we cannot help thinking that the champions of, say, 1905 will be better than the champions of 1903. A more useful article is that devoted to farm accounts, because, as a rule, farmers utterly neglect this side of their business. Not one in a thousand can do more than guess at the initial cost of his products, or is aware what profit he wishes for. But as agriculture becomes more and more of an exact science, book-keeping will ever require more attention. It is a subject to which more practical attention should be given in the elementary schools. To some of the other papers in this excellent handbook we hope to recur again. At present, we can do no more than mention Mr. F. Punchard's excellent article on dairy shorthorns, or that of Mr. Lewis Castle on fruit growing. Two new features must not be overlooked. On the breeders' map of England and Wales the position of the different agricultural, co-operative, and poultry societies has been marked; and the other is the admirable condensation of the Consular reports.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

THE WANDERING DABCHICK.

AT this season, so soon as the weather takes a turn towards cold, dabchicks or little grebes appear upon unaccustomed waters. These quaint little persons—for the more you watch them, the less like birds they seem—are not usually classed as migrants, and the autumn travellers may be only the young of the year driven by their parents from the water where they were reared. Yet if you take a dabchick in your hand you will find that it has surprisingly ample wings for a creature which never seems to use them, and is thus far better qualified for long flight than many birds which are known to cross the sea in autumn. Besides, it would have the immense advantage of being able, when tired, to rest in the sea, where it would, indeed, be more at home than in the air.

LIMITED MIGRATION.

The dabchick does not, however, breed very far North, and, as it can live happily on any fresh water that is not frozen, its autumn migrations need not be more extensive than those of the kingfisher, which often merely moves down a river for the winter and up again for the summer. On the other hand, many kingfishers leave England for the South of Europe in autumn, and probably many dabchicks do the same. At any rate, they appear suddenly on streams where they are not residents, just at the time when other autumn migrants suddenly appear in the fields. And it is often a very unfortunate choice of resting-places which the dabchick makes, for in any shallow stream which is kept clear of weeds he offers the easiest of sport to village lads, who know him as the "didapier," and almost always catch him when they see him.

THE DIDAPPER'S FATE.

And from the boys' point of view it must be admitted that a plump and rather comical-looking water-bird, with no tail at all—unless a tiny tuft of soft down can be called a tail—and very fluffy behind, which rides serenely on the water until you are quite close, and then vanishes with a pop, offers extreme temptation to pursuit, especially when you can still see it as plainly as possible,



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swimming below the surface like a great frog. If there is a boy on each bank, the dabchick gives itself no chance. It never thinks of flying, and all that its pursuers have to do is to keep it moving. Its dives grow shorter and shorter, and at last, in the flurry of despair, it thrills as much of itself as it can into a water-rat's hole, and is easily pulled out. Thus every year all the didappers which come to some streams are caught, but others always arrive in the following autumn. If they were protected they might become common and resident everywhere, and in many ways this little grebe is one of the most interesting and amusing of birds.

A REPTILIAN BIRD.

With their rudimentary tails and queer aquatic habits—for none of the grebes can stand upright, much less walk or run, on land—the dabchicks seem to have departed less than any other common birds from the type of the common ancestor of birds and reptiles, while their action in swimming is so exactly like that of a frog that you can hardly believe it to be a bird that you see beneath you, soaring furiously about in the shallows, twisting and turning and darting about in 6 in. depth of water without once disturbing the mud. This the dabchick is able to do, because its legs, with their extraordinary lobed feet, shaped something like a horse-chestnut leaf and with the texture of black kid, kick straight out sideways from the body and are brought together with a wide sweeping stroke behind. Its legs, too, are flat almost as knife-blades, and toothed like a saw behind with the sharp edges of the scales, thus giving the bird a splendid purchase against the slippery water-weeds, through which it can shoot itself at great speed with vigorous kicks, where another creature would be entangled.

COVERED EGGS.

The dabchick seems to have inherited, too, from its semi-reptilian ancestors the habit of covering its eggs with slimy water-weeds and leaving them often to be warmed by the sun acting upon the festering mass. Perhaps the habit of wild duck and other dry-nesting water-fowl of covering up their eggs when they leave them, may be a remnant of the same practice, which has been retained because it is useful for purposes of concealment; but in the case of the dabchick I have never succeeded, as you may at any time with wild duck, in startling the parent from the nest so that the eggs are left uncovered. If the dabchick

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sees you approaching from a distance you may, through field-glasses, observe that she gives a da! or two to the structure with her bill before slipping into the water, and from afar this action looks like covering the eggs. But no matter how stealthily you stalk her, nor how abruptly you scare her from the nest, you will always find the eggs fully and carefully covered with a thick layer of wet weeds.

WATER-BIRDS NEVER WASH.

But the peculiarity of the dabchick which appeals most to the village lads who hunt it is the close texture of the silky plumage of its breast. They will tell you that a number of dippers' breast skins sewn together will make a beautiful waistcoat, and that a few will make a warm and waterproof cap. This is very probable, because, though neither so white nor so compact as the "grebe," of which muffs and trimmings are made for ladies' wear, the breast plumage of the dabchick is wonderfully close and silky. Examining it, one realises that, strange as it may seem, water-birds are the only ones whose skins never by any chance get touched by water. So long as they are alive, and long after they are dead, they float with an air chamber all round their bodies, cunningly contrived of waterproof feathers closely overlapping each other. Thus, in a sense, water-birds may be distinguished from all others by the fact that they never wash, though we can hardly blame them for that, because if water could penetrate between their feathers the poor things would never be dry.

THE LUXURY OF DUST.

Nor is it any reproach to ground-birds that they seldom bathe in water, because it is a condition of their existence in wide open spaces that they should be able to fly straight away to a distance on the approach of danger. This they could not achieve if they got themselves into the drugged state of the sparrow or starling that one often sees, even in midwinter, with its feathers so soaked that it can hardly rise, with much wing action and effort, to the lowest branch of the nearest tree. So, like human beings who dwell in desert lands where drinking water is scarce and water for bathing an unheard-of luxury, the partridge and the skylark clean themselves with sand; and, as midday approaches, you may surprise them in the fluffed-up ecstasy of a dust bath, from which they explode like fireworks, scattering the dust from their whirring wings like smoke.

to get his feathers dirty among the cobwebby bushes and in his nest, has a mania for washing himself at least once a day. The grouse-bird, who must not, for his own safety, get his feathers wet, does not care for water at all, but has an equal mania for cleaning his plumes with dry dust. Much interesting speculation may be enjoyed in tracing human likes and dislikes, manias and fancies, to their proper utilitarian origins. Among other things it throws a good deal of light upon some phenomena of vice.

E. K. R.

SHEEP IN SNOW.

Of our domestic animals, sheep suffer less from snow than any other, unless it be on the mountains and the moors. Among the Welsh, Scottish, and Border hills a mishap to sheep is no rare occurrence in winter, but it generally comes indirectly, that is to say, a mere fall of snow, however heavy, would not harm them. But should wind come, and the snow be drifted, then it is not unusual for an entire flock to be destroyed. The anxieties of a hill shepherd during a heavy snowfall can scarcely be exaggerated. Even then, however, fatality is by no means inevitable. Over and over again have sheep long despaired of been found comparatively comfortable under a snowdrift, the danger under such circumstances arising not from the cold, but the chance of getting smothered. Our scene, however, is taken from the Lowlands, where this peril does not exist to the same extent as it does on the high windy places of moor and fell. The snow for some time has been falling steadily and persistently on the broad, level field, and now lies several inches thick, like a flat white coverlet. It has covered up the pasture, and till it goes



W. Rawlings.

ALAS! ALAS! FOR THE WINTER SNOWS.

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THE BIRDS "ORDER OF THE BATH."

Perching birds, on the other hand, are able to indulge in the luxury of a water bath every day, because, even when their wings are wet, they can, if suddenly surprised by an enemy, still find safety in the nearest tree or bush, and make their escape by flitting from branch to branch, drying their wings with every movement. It is for this reason that birds' favourite bathing-places are always beneath overhanging trees or bushes. That they thoroughly enjoy the bath you can see by their attitudes during the process and the jealousy with which they drive others away from a share in it. Indeed, by watching the birds' "Order of the Bath"—the order, that is to say, in which they permit each other to take it—you get a very good idea of their respective fighting powers. No bird allows any other bird that he can "lick" to bathe before him, or even to bathe too close to him.

A CONTRAST IN ECSTASIES.

Put down a pan of clean water before some house pigeons which have been without a bath for a day or two, and see how the champion of the house—with his wife, if he happens to be in an uxorious mood—will occupy the whole pan and wallow in it for ten minutes together, while the other pigeons hungrily gather round, often lying outside the pan with spread wings and fluffed feathers to catch the drops which the great man showers out of his bath. Turn to the poultry yard, on the other hand, and you will see the hens lying in all sorts of absurd attitudes, with feathers on end while their crooked legs kick up showers of dust over their backs, as they wallow in an ecstasy of titillation. By comparing these two pictures we see the cunning way of Nature, who has induced in all wild creatures a positive mania for—what?—for just what is good for them. The water-bird, whose feathers are necessarily always clean, but who would suffer if they got wet, has a mania for preening his body plumage all day long, thus keeping it always trim and watertight. The perching bird, who is always liable

away the shepherd cannot hope for the sheep to get such a thing as a bite of grass. He must, in fact, dismiss that from his mind altogether, and feed them carefully as long as the storm lasts, bringing the turnip-cutter into operation or laying down roots. Perhaps the best plan of all is to fold them on turnips. Most of the Lowland grazing sheep are already on roots at this time of the year. If they have enough to eat little harm is likely to come to them. Damp is much more injurious than cold, and flocks which come unscathed through the most Arctic weather are often left with an evil legacy of colds and bad throats from a prolonged period of rain, particularly in the case of early-lambing ewes. When sheep have full liberty to take care of themselves, they seem naturally fortified against the worst form of weather. But the requirements of modern mutton have obliged flockmasters to follow a style of treatment that tends to soften the creature's natural hardness. If an animal whose natural habitat is the cold and hilly regions of the North is obliged to live its days in a narrow fold, where its guardian's chief care is that it should lay on flesh quickly, it would be hopeless to expect it to be as indifferent to weather as its hardier progenitors were. For that very reason much more care should be given it when the snow comes, both in the way of providing abundant food and also shelter from the cold blast. The shepherd looking on such a wintry scene as we have depicted may well ransack his mind for the weather-wisdom that will enable him to foretell how long the storm is likely to last.

JOE GREENWOOD'S RIGHT HAND.

By ELEANOR G. HAYDEN.

MASSES of cloud that deepened from livid grey to thunderous purple lay piled along the horizon. The trees in Farmer Goodey's great meadow, where the haymakers were busy, drooped their branches for weariness, and hushing every leaf to quietude listened for the coming of the rain.

"I reckon we be gwine to have a storm afoor us be much older," quoth oracularly Dan'el Giles from the top of the load to the tall young labourer who was "pitching" down below.

Joe Greenwood laughed as he thrust his prong deep into a roller. He lifted the unwieldy burden high above his head and shook it over his comrade, half burying him beneath the fragrant shower.

"If thee've telled ma that once sence nunchin' thee've telled it ma six times. Cassn't 'ee find summat afresh to say?"

"It lays on my mindt, it do. I be ter'ble afeared as us won't git this year medder cleared afoor he bustes," replied Dan'el, referring presumably to the storm.

A short interval of silence ensued, during which the man on the waggon rose higher still above the rest of the world, whose doings he could survey at his ease.

"I s'pose Annie telled 'ee as we ha' got a lodger at the farm?" he asked presently.

"Aye, bin ther' a wuk or two. What sort is a?"

"A smartish-lookin' young feller, and free wi' his brass, so I reckon he dwun't ha' to mek it. He lays about smokin' mos'n gen'y when he yen't tryin' to ketch fish. Rum thing as gentlefolks be sa fond o' stannin' all day long wi' a rod an' a line when they could pay arraone to do't fur 'um, or buy their mackereel an' herrin's at shop! A sim's to find plenty to say to your sweetheart," added Dan'el, after a pause.

At the words Joe Greenwood stuck his prong in the ground, and leaning his hands on the top glanced across the field. Behind the farmer's wife, who had come out with all the household to help the wearied haymakers, a pink cotton sun-bonnet and a man's straw hat bent in close proximity over a couple of rakes that had become entangled together.

Joe could not see exactly what took place; that something happened was clear enough from the manner in which the sun-bonnet was hastily uplifted, revealing a charming, winsome face, lit by a pair of dark eyes and covered at the moment with blushes that deepened as the girl met her lover's gaze. An instant she stood, the picture of rosy confusion, then with a smile she waved her hand, turned from the figure in grey flannels at her side, and began diligently to ply her rake once more. Young Greenwood's brow relaxed, he gave an answering smile, and unconsciously began to whistle "Annie Laurie," thus affording Dan'el an opening, of which the latter was not slow to avail himself.

"If thee ha' started that ther' toon once sence nunchin', thee've started 'un six times," said he, with a twinkle in his eye that belied the gruffness of his voice. "Cassn't 'ee think o' summat afresh to holler?"

Joe's genial laugh rang out. "It lays on my mindt, it do, Danny, an' kips a-jumpin' out o' my mouth afoor I can statp it. Shall I tell 'ee why? 'Cause Annie ha' fixed the day an' the banns is to be called a-Sunday. She've just about plagued ma wi' puttin' it off an' off, but I've caught her now."

"Stiddy on, lad! Thee can't niver rightly say an ooman be cotched till the ring be on an' the words be said. They be uncommon wild birds, be faymales," and Dan'el, who remained a bachelor, despite frequent attempts on his part to remedy the defect, wagged his head as one who spoke from wide experience.

Meanwhile the lurid clouds had rolled up and blotted out the sky. Over the waiting trees swept the storm, bowing their loly heads and ruffling the leaves of poplar and abele until they showed silver-white against the inky background. Suddenly there leapt to earth a yellow streak of light, the stillness was rent by a crash that shook the farm horses from their stolid phlegm, and set them plunging after a fashion which Dan'el, on the top of the load, found anything but pleasant. At the same moment the floodgates above were opened and rain fell in a deluge. A scene of confusion followed. While the men ran to the frightened animals' heads, endeavouring by voice and gesture to soothe them, the women flung down their rakes and fled in all directions, some seeking shelter under the trees, others making their way as fast as possible towards the house. Among the latter—as Dan'el, notwithstanding his uncomfortable position, found leisure to notice—was Joe's sweetheart, with the straw hat still beside her.

When the haymakers gathered, a quarter of an hour later, in the kitchen at the farm, Annie was missing, a fact which Mistress Goodey loudly proclaimed as she hustled to and from the cellar.

"All these folks wantin' a drop o' beer to keep out the

damp, an' that girl no'ers to be found. Did none o' you see which way she went?"

Twice Dan'el opened his lips to speak, twice he closed them again, sacrificing upon the altar of friendship the pleasure of startling his audience with a fine bit of gossip. When at last the truant appeared, flushed, breathless, excited, he could refrain himself no longer. Wedging her into a corner, from which escape was difficult, he sternly demanded "What she an' that ther' lodger chap wur a-doin' in the arbour among the nut bushes?"

"We were talkin'," she answered, with a poor attempt at unconsciousness.

"Talkin'! I meks no doubt but what 'ee wur. Now luk 'ee year, my gal. I sin you two a-cuttin' up towards the garden all by yourselves, an', thinks I, them two be up to summat, so I crope round ther' arter we'd thrown the tarpaulin over the load, an' I speered in through a crank. Ah! you wur 'talkin' I'll war'nt. I s'pose thee 'ull say as he kep' his arm round 'ee and kissed 'ee so's you could conversation better. If I finds you two a-talkin' in that kind o' way agen I 'ull let Joe knaw on't purty quick, an' you med lay your best hat as he 'ull spile that ther' lodger chap's handsome beauty fur 'n'."

Annie gave the speaker a frightened glance. "No, no, don't tell him, 'twould vex him dreadful, an' maybe lead to mischief. The young gentleman means no harm; he is on'y silly about a—" Why shouldn't I say it out? About a pretty face—like the rest o' you stupid men."

"Handsome is as handsome does, an' a purty face ben't allus a thing to be dee-sired, 'spec'y fur a gal like thee as hasn't narra father nor mother to look arter 'ee," returned Dan'el sententiously, who felt that his questions had been productive of small good.

He noted the glow of admiration in the stranger's eyes when they rested on the girl's piquant face; he marked a hand, which he stigmatised as "no better'n an ooman's, it be that white an' finnicky," steal out to grasp at little brown fingers, as Annie, carrying her tray of glasses, moved backwards and forwards among the haymakers, and his heart misgave him for his friend.

"Ten't no bizniss o' mine," he told himself, while splashing homeward through the rain, "an' I dwun't see what call ther' be fur ma to worrit over 't, but fur all that I shall be mortal glad when you idle young spark be gone, an' they two be wed fast and sure. Joe thinks a deal too much o' she—seein' one ooman be much the same as another—an' twud goo hard wi' 'un if she jacked 'un up."

Pretty Annie, however, had evidently no intention of so doing, for the banns were duly called. Three Sunday mornings Joe bore, with scarlet cheeks and mien that strove to appear unconcerned, the scarce suppressed giggles and merciless scrutiny of the more frivolous part of the congregation. Two Sunday afternoons he sauntered with his sweetheart by the brook, indulging in those public demonstrations of affection which are regarded as essential during courtship and superfluous after marriage. On the third Sabbath the walk was omitted for a more important ceremony, to wit, the introduction of the bride to her future home. With pardonable pride Joe threw open the door of the cottage, the furnishing of which had cost him much patient thought and self-denial, and bade her enter the kitchen, where the creepers outside the window broke the sunshine into a thousand cool green shadows that danced upon the brick floor to every breath of wind. A few weeks ago the prospect of reigning here as mistress would have satisfied the utmost craving of Annie's vain little soul. But her ambitions had enlarged since then, and the possibilities now within her reach made the future she had contemplated seem tame and colourless.

"You be wunnerful quiet," said her lover, when, after having inspected the dainty dwelling from top to bottom, they stood once more in the living-room. "Aint you satisfite wi' 't, or is there aught else you'd like? You've on'y got to speak, fur, Annie, my dear, I'd cut off my right hand to please 'ee," and he drew her to him until her head rested against his breast.

To his surprise, she broke into a passion of tears. "I don't want to be married yet!" she gasped between her sobs. "Let us wait a bit longer, Joe—I'm so young, and—oh! I can't marry you a-Saturday! You'd much best give me up."

He laughed as he stroked her hair. "Give you up, when we've kep' comp'ny ever sence you come to the farm! You feels a bit frightened about it now, 'cause you thinks when once it's done you can't never undo 't; but, bless 'ee, you won't want to—not you, when once I've brought you home. You've been workin' too hard lately, I'll warrant, runnin' up an' down waitin' on that lodger. Is he gone?"

The cheek beneath Joe's hand flushed into sudden tingling heat at the question.

"No," she replied; "he talks of leavin' one day this week, I don't know which. I must be gettin' back to the farm now, or I shall be late for tea. Good-bye, then, till Saturday." And

freesing herself from his clasp she quitted the house, taking with her the sunlight. So it seemed to her lover.

The wedding morning dawned fair as heart could desire. After exhausting all other means of hastening the laggard hours that intervened between breakfast and that fixed for the marriage, the bridegroom repaired to the cottage to satisfy himself for the hundredth time that everything was in order. He gathered a bunch of white roses to place on the table, he filled the kettle, from which—strange, sweet thought!—his wife would make tea for him that evening, and having set wide the windows that the fresh morning air might blow through the rooms, he turned his restless steps down the sunny street, where thatched dwellings slumbered on either side, and towards the farmstead nestling among its orchards. He was leaning on the gate when he descried Dan'el, looking unusually perturbed, coming towards him from the house. The elder man halted in front of Joe, whom he regarded with a mixture of curiosity and compassion.

"Lark-a-mussy-me!" he began; "who'd a-thowt as she'd a-gone an' took off the very marnin' she wur to ha' bin wed!"

The solid earth seemed to slip from under Greenwood's feet; he clutched at the rail and said in a voice he could not recognise as his own, "What d'ee mean? Who's gone? Speak out, fur God's sake."

"I be ter'ble sorry fur 'ee, but 'tis true anuff, and thee'd ha' had to a-yeard 'un sooner or later. She's flog away—popped off like a gun, an' never left sa much as a puff o' smoke behindit."

"When did she go?"

"One o' the men as wur about wi' a sick cow sin she a-walkin' towards the town soon arter 'twur light. When missus come down she wur no'ers to be found, an' her bed hadn't bin sleep in all night," and Dan'el turned aside that he might not behold the anguish in his friend's eyes.

Thus it came about that no wedding took place that day. A broken man crept back to the cottage and drew the white curtains across the windows.

"She'll come home some day," he said as he locked the door. Dan'el, who was "odd servant" at the farm, and was acquainted with many things, thought otherwise, and ventured to hint that Joe was well rid of "an artful hussy." The reception accorded to his suggestion, however, caused him hastily to withdraw it, and, waxing confidential over a glass of beer that evening, he informed a select circle of friends that "ther ben't a mossel o' doubt as poorer Joe be a bit cracky about Annie. He wun't believe no harm o' she, an' sez 'tis all his fault she run away; that he worried her to get wed, till she couldn't put up wi' no longer. But, bless 'ee, I knows better'n that," and the speaker winked solemnly as he took a deep draught. "Ther's one thing as I'd like to say," he continued, setting down his glass; "if arra-one's hankerin' arter a broken yead, all as he've got to do be just to goo an' tell Joe Greenwood that his sweetheart gin he the go-by fur that fisherman chap as lodged at the farm."

Three years passed away, and Annie was almost forgotten by the villagers, when one day in early spring a rumour spread abroad that she had returned and had taken up her abode at a lonely shanty, remote from any other dwelling. Farmer Goodey's meadow was a sheet of quivering gold, and the hawthorn hedges had sprinkled the land with snow that defied the sun, ere the news reached Joe's ears.

"I alius knawed as she 'ud come back," he said to his heart; "but she've bin a ter'ble long whiled away, an' I'm hungry fur a sight on her."

When his day's work was over he started for the little solitary hut that was set like an outcast, apart from its fellows. The birds were singing in bush and tree; warm amber sunshine lay over everything and lingered like a caress on the bent head of the woman who sat in the cottage doorway. For a few minutes Joe stood and gazed his fill, noting the ravages time or trouble had wrought in his sweetheart. The pretty colour had faded from her cheeks; her hands, too, had grown white. Over her face an indefinable change had passed; the bloom of girlhood had vanished, and with it a something—he knew not what—the absence of which thrilled him with a pang of almost physical pain.

"Annie," he began—and at the sound of his voice she sprang to her feet—"twur o'ny this artermoon that I yeard you wur come back; no one telled me afoor. My dear, I shouldn't ha' kept you waitin' these weeks if I'd ha' known; but why didn't you send ma word? You knows as I loves 'ee."

The eyes his were holding filled with tears at the passionate appeal. She stretched her arms blindly towards him.

"You love me! After—everything?"

"A-course I do; 'twur my fault as you wur druv away. Why shouldn't I love 'ee?"

The question was answered in a wholly unexpected manner. From the shadowy recesses of the interior a little girl, fair and dainty, toddled towards the stranger, who was standing against the evening light. "Daddy, daddy!" she cried, in sweet, shrill accents of welcome. An electric shock quivered through every fibre of Joe's frame. Dropping the hands clasped between his, he recoiled with a gesture that sent the scarlet blood surging to

the roots of Annie's hair. She watched the look which he riveted on the child, and which brought home as nothing else had done the full measure of her guilt and shame. She watched it change from slow-dawning comprehension to something deeper than anger, and instinctively she thrust the little one behind her. The remembrance of their last parting flashed through her memory, as Greenwood, stripped of trust and hope without which the love which survives is but Dead Sea fruit, turned and left her, to stumble back through the lane where the sun was still shining, the birds still sang.

Summer wore away, mocking with its beauty the lonely man and woman who nursed their pain apart. Stern lines appeared round Joe's mouth, and the hatred in his eyes when they encountered little Ruth became so menacing that Dan'el Giles conceived it his duty, as one who had been cognisant of affairs from the beginning, to give Annie a word of caution.

"I dwun' goo fur to say as he 'ud do the chile a mishtiff, but if I wur thee I'd kip she out o' his way. It med be all right, or it medn't—ther's no tellin' wi' a man which be a comical cratur, though I sez it as didn't ought to, seein' I be one meself. Thee treated Joe bad, 'ee knew, an' 'tis nought but nat'rall as he feels spiteful agin the babby."

Annie covered her face with her hands to hide her tears. "Yes, I treated him shameful," she wailed. "I was cruel to him, and yet it seems to me now that I loved him all the time. It was my vanity that led me astray. *He*, you know, promised to make me a lady, and Joe, he said, would soon get another sweetheart. Somehow I didn't think he would."

"You didn't goo to church wi' the tother?"

"No," she answered almost in a whisper; "he meant to marry me—I'm quite sure he did—but time slipped by, we drifted, and when baby came it didn't seem to matter—it was too late then, you see. My little girl, what a lot she has taught me! And she'll grow up to despise her mother."

Dan'el furtively drew his cuff across his face. "'Tis an unkéd job fur both on 'ee, an' an uncommon unkéd job," said he, shaking his head mournfully. "An' I dwun' see how 'tis ever to come right ways about agen, seein' Joe ben't what you med call of the furgivin' kind like some men; but I be ter'ble sorry fur the pair on 'ee," and the speaker shuffled away before his feelings became unmanageable.

During harvest, Annie, like all the other able-bodied women of the village, repaired, with her child, to the cornfields. It happened one day that she found herself working not far from Joe, and, mindful of Dan'el's warning, she sent little Ruth to a distance under the charge of an older girl. Throughout the morning the two who had once been lovers tied sheaves behind the reaping-machine, and set up shocks together without exchanging a word. The dinner-hour was approaching when Annie noticed her companion's attention attracted by something on the edge of the uncut corn. Startled by his wild expression, she followed the direction of his gaze, and perceived to her horror a tiny figure in a blue pinafore, crowned by a head of ruffled golden hair, standing, invisible to the driver, immediately in the path of the machine. A few minutes and the notched blades would reap not yellow grain alone. The mother strove to shriek, but the sound died on her lips; dumbly she clung to the man whom she had betrayed—her agonised eyes urging the entreaty she was powerless to utter—while the broad rakes rose and fell with a pleasant whirr, and Joe looked, not at her, but away down the long swathes in their track. His clenched hands, the dew on his forehead, betokened the sharp conflict raging within—evidence which Annie interpreted to her despair. Her hold fell from his arm; she staggered back against a shock, and closed her eyes that she might not see what would happen, while she waited for her child's death cry. A cry indeed she heard—a fierce exclamation wrung from a strong man by sudden, sharp agony—and she knew no more. The touch of soft arms about her neck, the pressure of baby lips on hers, awoke her from unconsciousness. Raising her head she gazed around. Near the machine, which was standing idle, a knot of men and women were gathered round something on the ground. The sight thrilled Annie with a new and awful fear. Putting the little one aside, she drew near the group, which made way for her as for one who had a right to the foremost place.

"He is dead!" she exclaimed, as her look fell upon Greenwood's face and bloodstained form.

"Dead! not he," responded Dan'el cheerily from where he knelt by his friend improvising a rough bandage; "he ben't dead, bless 'ee, nor gwine to die yet a-whiles, be 'oe. A cotched his foot an' fell just as he'd chucked the babby out o' the way, an' the knives led holdt o' his poor hand summatar crool. 'Twun't be much use on fur the rest o' his days, I'm a-feared; but as Bible sez, 'tis better to enter into life wi' one hand than to be killed full an' wholly."

Dan'el's philosophy was lost upon Annie, who, regardless of the bystanders, drew Joe's head on to her bosom and kissed his pale face. He opened his eyes, and, smiling up at her, whispered:

"I told you once as I'd cut it off to please 'ee; d'you remember, Annie? Where's the child?" he enquired presently, at which a dozen pairs of willing feet started on the quest. When little Ruth stood before him, blushing and shy in the presence of so many strangers, he regarded her steadfastly some minutes without speaking. The likeness to her father, even at her early age, was undeniable; she would never cease to recall the dark page in her mother's history; she would absorb a share of Annie's affection, which Joe would fain have kept for himself alone. Yet, despite these things, a wonderful new love for the child was springing within him. She was in part his now--had

he not purchased her at the cost of his good right hand? His present pain was on her behalf. Seeing, therefore, that he had laid such a load of debt upon her innocent shoulders, he could not choose, being the man he was, but take her to his heart. And so Annie came home at last, not the bright girl of her lover's dreams, but a chastened, humble woman, the music of whose life was set in a minor key. No children of his own played about her husband's knee; the sunshine of little Ruth's presence, however, brightened what otherwise would have been twilight happiness, and as years went on Joe was often heard to say that though he had lost one right hand, he had gained another.

THE BEAUTIFUL

EVEN with the beautiful features of these lovely girls placed before us in the fine mezzotints of Finlayson (after the pictures of C. Read), one can but marvel at the sensation caused by their appearance at Court. Their undeniable loveliness was made more bewitching by a naïveté and an absence of restraint uncommon in the artificial age on which they shed the lustre of their fair young beauty. It was the ceremonious period of the dandies—full of witty, wicked, conceited “fine ladies and gentlemen.” Nor was the rise of “the beauties” from a position of comparative poverty and obscurity to the very pinnacle of rank and fashion less remarkable. Like the milkmaid of the song, each might have said :

“ My face is my fortune.”

Walpole speaks of them as being “scarce gentlewomen, but by their mother.” This was hardly true, and certainly not generous, though it must be admitted that neither of them was overburdened with brains or culture.

There appear to have been two branches of the Gunning family who, in the reign of Henry VIII., possessed considerable estates in Kent, Somerset, and Gloucester. In the reign of James I. one of the Kentish Gunnings settled in Ireland, and became the ancestor of the Gunnings of Castle Coote, Roscommon. One of them, a Mr. John Gunning, was the father of the two famous beauties, their mother being the eldest daughter of the sixth Viscount Mayo. There were two other daughters who died in childhood, and a third, Catherine, who, judging by her portrait, was equal in beauty to her two elder sisters. But little is heard of her. In 1769 she settled down to a quiet married life as the wife of a Mr. Robert Travis. She died at Somerset House in 1773, where she appears to have succeeded her mother as housekeeper.

The only brother, who is said to have fought with distinction at Bunker's Hill, attained the rank of major-general. He married Miss Minifie, the novelist. Their daughter, Elizabeth, a beautiful and accomplished girl, was, in 1791, the subject of much gossip. Ambitious of making a great match, she appears to have simultaneously carried on flirtations with her cousin, the Marquess of Lorne, and with Lord Blandford. But after much scandal and correspondence, the lady had to content herself with Major James Plunket.

In the year 1748 the Gunnings moved to Dublin; but, so straightened were their circumstances, that they found it a struggle to live. Mrs. Bellamy, the actress, in her autobiography, gives us a glimpse of the Gunnings' *ménage*, showing to what dire straits the family was driven. She was living in Dublin at the time, when one day returning from a rehearsal, she heard cries of distress and weeping.

She entered the house from which the sounds emanated,

MISS GUNNINGS.

and, apologising for the intrusion, enquired whether she could be of any assistance. She found “a woman of most elegant figure” surrounded by four beautiful girls and a boy of about three years. The lady, who proved to be Mrs. Gunning, explained to the kind-hearted actress that in order to avoid certain disagreeable consequences, the result of having lived beyond their income, her husband had been compelled to retire to the country, leaving herself and the children to the tender mercies of the bailiffs, who were even then preparing to turn them into the streets. Miss Bellamy, who quickly grasped the situation, at once took pity on them. She arranged that the children and the servant should stay with her while Mrs. Gunning joined her husband to assist him in settling his affairs. The bailiffs, too, were cleverly outwitted. As soon as night had fallen, Miss Bellamy sent her man-servant to wait under one of the windows and quietly receive everything sufficiently portable to allow of its being thrown to him.

It was while staying with her that a somewhat curious incident happened. Already dreaming, perhaps, of those great conquests which they hoped their beauty would secure for them, the young girls prevailed on their friend to take them to a certain well-known fortune-teller. In order to give this sibyl no clue as to their station, they disguised themselves in mean attire, and, instead of driving, quietly walked up to the house. To add to the deception Miss Bellamy put on a wedding-ring. Madam Fortune, as she was called, seems to have been remarkably accurate in her prognostications, foreseeing not only the exalted rank to which both girls afterwards attained, but also that ill-health which was to result in the death of the Countess of Coventry. She told the actress that she might take off the wedding-ring, as she never was, nor ever would be, married.

A year or so before they made their *début* in London the two lovely sisters were duly presented at Dublin Castle. Such was the improvidence of the family that poor Mrs. Gunning was at her wit's end to know how to dress them for the occasion.

In this dilemma she appealed to Sheridan—at that time manager of the Dublin Theatre and a friend of the Gunnings—and the difficulty was solved by arraying the distressed damsels out of the stage wardrobe.

The great sensation caused by their exquisite beauty was evidently not long in reaching London, for on June 8th, 1750, we find Mrs. Delany replying to her sister's enquiries from her residence near Dublin: “All you have heard of the Miss Gunnings is true, except their having a fortune; but,” adds this censorious old lady, “I am afraid that they have a greater want than that, which is discretion!”

In the autumn of the following year the future peeresses arrived in the metropolis, and the whole town speedily became intoxicated with their surpassing loveliness. Nothing could



MARIA COUNTESS OF COVENTRY.

(By Finlayson, after C. Read)



ELIZABETH DUCHESS OF HAMILTON.

(By Finlayson, after C. Read.)

exceed the curiosity excited by the beauty of the sisters. Great mobs waited at the doors to see them get into their chairs, and when it was known that they would be at the theatres people went early in order to secure places to see them. When the younger of the two was presented, after her first marriage, the crowd at the Drawing Room was so great that even noble ladies and gentlemen so far forgot their manners as to clamber on chairs and tables to get a peep at her.

Wraxall, referring to the inordinate lengths to which the public curiosity was carried, remarks: "I have heard the late Earl of Clermont say, that when walking with the two sisters in the Mall of St. James's Park, such crowds collected to gaze upon them, and so violent and importunate was their curiosity, that he, as well as the other gentlemen accompanying the Gunnings, have been obliged to draw their swords in order to defend the ladies while they effected a precipitate retreat."

Small wonder that the objects of such attentions had their fair young heads a little turned by such unrestrained worship. Writing to his friend, Mann, Walpole tells a story which at the time gave rise to much amusement: "As you talk of our beauties, I shall tell you a new story of the Gunnings, who make more noise than any of their predecessors since the days of Helen, though neither of them, nor anything about them, has yet been *teterrima belli causa*. They went the other day to see Hampton Court. As they were going into the Beauty Room, another company arrived. The housekeeper said, 'This way, ladies; here are the beauties!' The Gunnings flew into a passion, and asked her what she meant; they came to see the palace, and not to be shown as a sight themselves."

About a year after their arrival in London, rumours of an alliance between the elder—and, according to general opinion, the more beautiful—of the sisters and the Earl of Coventry began to go round the clubs. At the opening of Parliament, in November, 1751, he moved the address in the Lords; and Lord Chesterfield tells us he did it well enough, "though agitated at the same time by the two strong passions of fear and love, Miss Gunning being seated on one side of him and the House on the other." His Lordship adds: "That affair is within a few days of its crisis, but whether that will be a marriage or a settlement is undecided. Most people think the latter; for my part I think the former." Though there does not appear to have been any ground for the insinuations against Miss Gunning or her lover, the affair seems to have hung fire, and in the end was precipitated in a rather remarkable way. But we will allow the "Prince of Gossips" to tell the story in his own amusing fashion.

Writing to Mann, in the following February, he says: "The event that has made most noise since my last is the extempore wedding of the youngest of the two Gunnings, who

have made so vehement a noise. Lord Coventry, a grave young lord, of the remains of the patriot breed, has long dangled after the eldest, virtuously with regard to her virtue, not very honourably with regard to his own credit. About six weeks ago, Duke Hamilton, the very reverse of the Earl—hot, debauched, extravagant, and equally damaged in fortune and in person—fell in love with the youngest at the masquerade, and determined to marry her in the spring. About a fortnight since, at an immense assembly at my Lord Chesterfield's, made to show the house, which is really most magnificent, Duke Hamilton made violent love at one end of the room, while he was playing at pharaoh at the other end; that is, he saw neither the bank nor his own cards, which were of three hundred pound each: he soon lost a thousand. I own I was so little a professor in love, that I thought all this parade looked ill for the poor girl; and could not conceive, if he was so much engaged with his mistress as to disregard such sums, why he played at all. However, two nights afterwards, being left alone with her, while her mother and sister were at Bedford House, he found himself so impatient that he sent for a parson. The doctor refused to perform the ceremony without licence or ring; the Duke swore he would send for the Archbishop. At last they were married with a ring of the bed-curtain, at half-an-hour after twelve at night, at Mayfair Chapel. The Scotch are enraged; the women mad that so much beauty has had its effects; and, what is more silly, my Lord Coventry declares that now he will marry the other."

Walpole's forecast proved accurate. Less than three weeks after this midnight marriage, the lovely Maria became the Countess of Coventry.

In the summer she visited France, but the tour does not appear to have been a success. The jealousy and petulance of her husband, joined to the *gaucherie* and want of breeding and education displayed by his lovely but silly Countess, greatly amused the Parisians; and they would scarcely admit even the lady's claims to beauty. "Poor Lady Coventry," writes Walpole to his friend at Florence, "was under piteous disadvantages; for beside being very silly, ignorant of the world, breeding, speaking no French, and suffered to wear neither red nor powder, she had that perpetual drawback on her beauty; her lord, who is sillier in a wise way, as ignorant, ill-bred, and speaking very little French himself—just enough to show how ill-bred he is. The Duke de Luxemburg told him he had called up my Lady Coventry's coach; my lord replied: 'Vous avez fort bien fait.' He is jealous, prude, and scrupulous. At a dinner at Sir John Bland's, before sixteen persons, he caused his wife round the table, on suspecting that she had stolen on a little red, seized her, scrubbed it off by force with a napkin, and then told her that since she had deceived him and broke her promise,



ELIZABETH DUCHESS OF HAMILTON.

(By M. Jackson.)

he would carry her back to England. They were pressed to stay for the great fête at St. Cloud; he excused himself 'because it would make him miss a music meeting at Worcester,' and she excused herself from the fireworks at Madame Pompadour's 'because it was her dancing-master's hour.' I will tell you but one more anecdote, and I think you cannot be imperfect in your ideas of them. The Maréchale de Lowendahl was pleased with an English fan Lady Coventry had, who very civilly gave it her; my lord made her write for it again next morning, 'because he had given it her before marriage, and her parting with it would make an irreparable breach,' and send an old one in room of it! She complains to everybody she meets, 'How odd it is my lord should use her so ill, when she knows he has so great a regard that he would die for her, and when he was so good as to marry her without a shilling!'

In the same communication the old Court gossip gives us an amusing glimpse of her sister's establishment: "Duke Hamilton is the abstract of Scotch pride; he and the Duchess at their own house walk into dinner before their company, sit together at the upper end of their own table, eat off the same plate, and drink to nobody beneath the rank of an Earl." Well might Walpole wonder that anybody could be found so far wanting in self-respect as to tolerate such insufferable insolence.

The Duke of Hamilton, "equally damaged in his fortune and person," as bitter Horace said, did not enjoy many years of married life. Perhaps he was to be pitied. While yet a young man he had fallen madly, passionately in love with the beautiful Miss Chudleigh, who afterwards became notorious as the Duchess of Kingston. When he left her, to travel on the Continent, it was as her affianced husband. But an aunt of Miss Chudleigh's, who was against the match, intercepted their correspondence. Stung by her lover's desertion, as she was led to believe, in a moment of pique the beautiful young girl accepted the addresses of Mr. Hervey, afterwards Earl of Bristol, and was secretly married to him late one night by the light of a solitary candle, in the little village church of Lainston. It was a terrible blow for the Duke, and in endeavouring to forget his sorrows he plunged into a life of the wildest gaiety. But for the canker of this early disappointment, his life might have been a very different one, for Dr. Carlyle says he was "a man of letters could have kept himself sober."

As might have been expected, the Duke's union with Miss Gunning was not a very happy one. On the lady's side, it was undoubtedly prompted by ambition, and so, when His Grace died in 1758, the world was not very much surprised at the rather limited period of her retirement. With her beauty matured and improved, and handsomer than ever, the Duchess was speedily surrounded by a whole crowd of admirers. Foremost amongst these was the Duke of Bridgewater, and it was not long before he proposed and was accepted by the fair widow. Scandal, however, soon afterwards becoming busy with the Countess of Coventry's reputation, the Duke insisted that after their marriage the intimacy between the two sisters should cease. The Duchess, however, refused to acquiesce in this arrangement, and the match was consequently broken off.

The lady did not long remain disconsolate. On March 3rd,

1759, she gave her hand to John Campbell, afterwards Duke of Argyll. Walpole was evidently highly pleased with the match, which he said everybody liked but the Duke of Bridgewater and Lord Coventry.

By her marriage with the Duke of Hamilton she had one daughter, Elizabeth, who married the twelfth Earl of Derby, and two sons, who in turn succeeded to their father's titles.

By her second husband she had three sons and two daughters. One of the boys died in infancy, and, by a curious coincidence, the other two each became Duke of Argyll. In 1776, the Duchess was created Baroness of Hamilton in her own right. She was appointed one of the Ladies of the Bedchamber to Queen Charlotte, who, if report speaks truly, was very jealous of the King's admiration for her. During the Wilkes Riots she showed much courage. Though her husband was absent, and she was in delicate health, she refused to illuminate her house at the bidding of the mob, who battered the doors and windows for three hours. She died in London on May 20th, 1790.

The mother of one son and four daughters, Lady Coventry did not allow maternal duties to interfere with her pleasures. Throughout her brief career she continued to be one of the most admired leaders of fashionable Society. Though it is generally allowed that there was no serious cause for her husband's jealousy, there can be no doubt that she was an adept in the wiles of flirtation; and, as we have seen, the marked attentions she

permitted Viscount Bolingbroke to pay her seriously compromised her good name. To the end of her life she retained that simplicity—or silliness—of character which, from time to time, gave the world a good laugh at her expense.

One day she invited George Selwyn to see her new "birth-night" dress. It was of blue silk, richly brocaded with silver spots the size of a shilling. "How do you think I shall look in it, Mr. Selwyn?" asked the beautiful coquette. "Why," he replied, "you will be change for a guinea!"

Perhaps one of the best stories is the following: Chatting with her one evening, the King asked whether she was not sorry that there were to be no more masquerades. "No," she replied, "she was tired of them; she was surfeited with most sights; there was but one left she wanted to see—that was a coronation!" The old King was intensely amused at the naïveté of the reply. But her wish was never gratified, for the King outlived her by a fortnight.

The people were never tired of running after her, and one Sunday evening she was mobbed in Hyde Park. The good-natured King, in order that this might be prevented for the future, gave orders for her to have a guard; and on the following Sunday she made herself ridiculous by strutting about the park with two sergeants of the guard in front with their halberds, and twelve soldiers following her!

In the winter of 1759 the lovely Countess was attacked by consumption. It was said that she had

greatly injured her health by the use of white lead, to which, in common with other ladies of fashion, she was greatly addicted. Under date of December 23rd, Walpole wrote to his friend that her short span of life was fast drawing to a close: "The kingdom of beauty is in as great disorder as the kingdom of Ireland. My Lady Pembroke looks



MRS. J. PLUNKETT.

(By Bartolozzi, after Saunders, Jun.)



CATHERINE TRAVIS.

(By Houston, after F. Cotes.)

like a ghost—poor Lady Coventry is going to be one." The heartless wit spoke only too truly. Though she recovered sufficiently to attend the trial of Lord Ferrars—when Walpole noticed her and Lord Bolingbroke acting over all the old comedy of eyes—and lingered through the following summer, the first day of October saw the end. And what a sad, sad end it was! Throughout her last illness her personal appearance was, as ever, her chief concern. When she took to her bed she would have no light in the room but the lamp of a teakettle. At the finish she took things through the curtains of her bed without suffering them to be withdrawn, lest others should see the ravages disease had made. Poor, frivolous, beautiful butterfly! She was not yet twenty-eight when she thus strangely fulfilled the dark prophecy of the Dublin fortuneteller.

For permission to publish two of the pictures shown thanks are due to the Earl of Coventry, whose lively interest in his beautiful ancestors is well known.

A. W. JARVIS.

IN THE GARDEN

BEAUTIFUL HEATH PATHS.

ONE kind of path, not often seen, but always pleasant, and in autumn distinctly beautiful, can be made of the Common Heather. We know of such a path 12 ft. wide and some hundreds of feet long, carpeted with this native Heath, mown once a year, and feeling like a thick pile carpet to the feet; grey-green in summer, bronzed-coloured in late autumn, and in the second and third weeks in August thickly set with short sprays of the low-toned pink of the Heather bloom. It is not so dry as a gravel path, but a good deal drier than grass, and has a pleasant feeling of elasticity that is absent in common turf. Many are the pleasure grounds in the South of England and in Scotland where the soil is sandy and perhaps peaty; any such can have these pleasant Heathy paths. We have even seen them on a poor sandy clay, scarcely good enough to call loam, in Sussex, for Culluna, unlike the other Heaths, will grow willingly in clay. In the case quoted the plant was wild in the place.

THE PERGOLA IN ENGLISH GARDENS—ITS MAKING AND PLANTING.

Last spring an excellent paper was read, at a meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society, by Miss Jekyll upon a subject with which few have a better acquaintance, and this paper has been reprinted in the recently published volume of the Journal. We think a few extracts from the paper will be most

helpful at the present moment, when many are contemplating adding a pergola to their garden. As Miss Jekyll points out: "It is only of comparatively late years that we have borrowed the pergola from the gardens of Italy. Borrowed is, perhaps, in its complete sense not quite the right term to use, for borrowing implies returning or repaying, whereas, having borrowed the pergola, we have certainly kept it for our own. The simplest form of pergola in Italy is made of stout poles, guiding and supporting the trunks of the vines, connected across the path by others of less diameter, with a roofing of any long rods laid lengthways across the top. This is repaired from time to time by putting in fresh uprights or other portions in the careless, happy-go-lucky way that characterises the methods of domestic and rural economy of the Italian peasant or small proprietor."

MAKING THE PERGOLA.

For our English gardens we have the choice of various materials for the main structure. If the pergola is to be near enough to the house to be in any sort of designed relation to it, and especially if the house be of some importance, the piers should be of the same material as the house walls—brick or stone as the case may be. Fourteen-inch brick piers laid in cement are excellent and easily made. Such piers may be said to last for ever, and if it is desirable that they should not be red, or whatever may be the normal colour of the brick used, it is easy to colour them in limewash to suit any near building. For association with refined brick building bricks are sometimes moulded on purpose of thinner shape, either square or half-round in plan, the latter being for piers that are to show as round columns. Brick, stone, marble, or wooden columns are also used in refined designs.

For more ordinary work the piers may be of Oak trunks of a diameter of 8in. to 10in. These if tarred, or charred at the butts high enough up to show a charred space of a foot above the ground-line, and put into the ground like gate-posts, will last from fifteen to eighteen years, or have about the lifetime of an ordinary field gate-post. A better and more enduring way is to have the posts of Oak 8in. square, set on squared stones that stand a foot out of the ground, with a stout iron

dowel let into the foot of the post and the top of the stone. Unless the appearance of the Oak post is desired there is little, if anything, to choose in point of cost between this and the solid brick pier, as the Oak has to be squared and the plinth shaped and bedded on a concrete foundation.

In most places local custom and convenience of obtaining local material will be the best guide in choosing what the pergola is to be made of. Larch posts are nearly as good as Oak, and Larch tops are the best of all materials for the top roofing.

Whatever may be the kind of post or pier, it is important to have them connected by good beams. The beam ties the opposite pairs of posts or piers together across the path. In the case of brick or stone piers it should be of Oak or Larch 7in. to 8in. square, not quite horizontal, but slightly rising in the



MARIA COUNTESS OF COVENTRY.

(From the picture at Croome Court.)

middle. This is of some importance, as it satisfies the eye with the feeling of strong structure, and is actually of structural utility.

It is of course possible to make a pergola of iron with very flat arches, and supporting rods and wires or wire netting for the top; but it is the material least recommended and the one that is the least sympathetic to the plants; indeed in many cases contact with the cold iron is actually harmful.

A modification of the continuous pergola is in many cases as good as, or even better than, the more complete kind. This is the series of posts and beams without any connection in the direction of the length of the path, making a succession of flowering arches; either standing quite clear or only connected by garlands swinging from one pair of piers to the next along the sides of the path, and perhaps light horizontal rails also running lengthwise from pier to pier.

This is the best arrangement for Roses, as they have plenty of air and light, and can be more conveniently trained as pillars and arches, while the most free-growing of the Ayrshires and hybrid multiflora ramblers willingly make swinging garlands. Roses are not so good for the complete pergola.

PLANTS FOR THE PERGOLA.

To come to the plants, and to take first the cases in which most shade is desired, with beauty of flower or foliage, the best are certainly Grape Vines, Aristolochia, Virginia Creeper, and Wistaria. They are all, except Virginia Creeper, slow to grow at first, but in four years they will be growing strongly. Vines should be planted a fair size, as large as can be had in pots, or two or three years will be lost at the beginning. Aristolochia, and especially Wistaria, though they grow fast when established, always make a long pause for reflection at the beginning of their new life's journey.

It is therefore a good plan, when a pergola is planted with these as the main things for its future clothing, to plant at intervals several Clematis montana, or even the common but always beautiful C. Vitalba. These, especially C. montana, will make a fine show for some years, while the slower plants are making their first growth; and as C. montana has in many soils a very long lifetime, the best it can do will be over by the time the permanent plants are maturing and wanting the whole space. The Sweet-water Vines of the Chasselas class, known in England as Royal Muscadine,

Among some others of the best plants for the open pergola are the free-growing Japan Honeysuckle, the common but always delightful white Jasmine, the new Polygonum baldschuanicum, Clematis Flammula, the little-known but quite excellent Clematis paniculata, flowering in October, the large-flowered Clematis, late winter Honeysuckle, Crataegus pyracantha, Rhodotypos kerrioides, Kerria japonica, double-flowered Brambles, and Forsythia suspensa.

HOW TO PLANT AND STAKE A TREE.

When planting a tree, prepare the ground beforehand, so that when the trees arrive they can be put at once into their proper places without having to be laid in. If the trees are to be planted thickly, trench the ground to a depth of at least 2 ft., keeping the top spit to the top all the while, merely burying the turf. If the soil is poor, enrich it during the trenching. If possible, this trenching should be done the spring previous to the planting of the trees, and the ground cropped with Potatoes or Cabbages to keep down weeds during summer. If the trees are to be planted wide apart or as isolated specimens, make large holes varying in diameter from 6 ft. to 10 ft., these being trenched 2 ft. or 2½ ft. deep, and filled in again to within 1 ft. of the surface. The shape of the hole is a small matter, round or square being equally good. In some instances, however, especially when a tree is being moved with a large mass of soil, a square hole will be found handier than a round one, on account of the additional room given by the corners.

The time to plant is of much importance, for though deciduous trees may be transplanted throughout the whole of winter, October, November, February, and March are preferable to December or January. October and November are the two best months, as then the ground is warm, and root action begins before winter sets in. If the trees are simply to be transplanted from one position in the garden to another, the work may be begun, in the case of deciduous trees, as soon as the leaves turn colour and begin to fall. In lifting, take care not to injure the roots. When putting the spade into the ground the edge should be to the tree, not the face. Digging must begin at a reasonable distance from the tree, and if a ball of soil is not required, the soil should be forked from between the roots into a trench previously made round the stem. If, while lifting, any of the main roots have suffered, cut the



THE THREE MISS GUNNINGS.

(From a print in the possession of Lord Coventry.)

have foliage of excellent form that is beautiful in autumn with its marbling of yellow. The Parsley or cut-leaved Vine is another desirable kind. Vitis cordata, the sweet-scented Vine, has large wide leaves that give ample shade, and a strong habit of growth, and flowers that in hot sunshine freely give off their delicious scent; while for gorgeous autumn colouring of crimson and yellow the Vine commonly known as Vitis Coignetiae is quite unequalled. There is also the Claret Vine, whose leaves turn a low-toned red in late summer and autumn.

The height and width of the pergola and the width apart of the pairs of piers can only be rightly estimated by a consideration of the proportions of other near portions of the garden, so that it is only possible to suggest a kind of average size for general use. The posts or piers should stand from 7 ft. 2 in. to 8 ft. out of the ground when the piers stand from 8 ft. to 9 ft. apart across the path. In a garden where there is nothing very high close by, this kind of proportion, rather wider than high, will be likely to be the most suitable; but there may be circumstances, such as a walk through a kitchen garden, where economy of space is desired, or when the pergola has to pass between tall trees at a little distance to right and left, when the proportion that is rather taller than wide had best be used.

In a whole or covered pergola, the pairs of piers would be further apart in the length of the walls than between the individuals of each pair across the walk, but in the open pergola, where there is no roof and either no connection or only garlands and level side rails—or garlands alone—they may stand closer.

For the open pergola without top, Roses are among the best of plants; on one post a pillar Rose and on the other a rambler. A select list for this use would be: As pillars, Alister Stella Gray, nankeen yellow; Reine Marie Henriette, red; Climbing Aimée Vibert, white; Carmine Pillar and Waltham Climber No. 1, reds; and for ramblers, the Garland, Dundee Rambler, Bennett's Seedling, and Mme. Alfred Carrière, all white or flesh white; Crimson Rambler, Reine Olga de Wurtemberg, Longworth Rambler, and Dawson, reds; as well as multiflora single and double, the large-flowered multiflora, and R. Brunonii. To keep the basis of the piers clothed, some strong young shoots of the current year should be shortened so as best to cover the space, when, instead of making the whole length they would otherwise have attained, they will stop growing at the tips and throw their strength into preparation for flowering shoots at the lower levels.

injured parts away with a sharp knife and tar over the wounds. When planting, the tree should be stood in the hole and a stick laid across the top of the hole near the tree to ascertain whether the depth is right, sufficient space for an inch of soil over the uppermost root being allowed. The centre of the hole should be filled in slightly higher than the sides, and on the little mound the tree should be stood, laying the roots out carefully all round. When filling the soil in some fine material should be worked in among the roots with the hand, and before the hole is fully filled in give a good watering; this has the effect of settling the soil well about the roots. The amount of ramming necessary depends on the consistency of the soil. After a tree is planted in early autumn a mulching of rotten manure may be given, but if the planting is done in spring the mulching is better left until early summer when the ground has become warmed.

STAKING A TREE.

After planting, staking, where necessary, should be attended to. It is not necessary to stake every tree that is planted. When it is sturdy, with a well-balanced head and set of roots, and the position is not exposed to rough winds, staking is needless. If, however, the stem is weak or the roots are mostly on one side, not spread round the tree, or the position is very exposed, staking for a time will be necessary. In the case of young trees little difficulty will be experienced, as good straight stakes can be easily got. As a rule one stake is quite enough for a tree and that should be driven in as close as possible to the trunk without injuring the trunk or roots. To the stake the tree should be secured with wire or stout tarred string, using thin cushions of felt, leather, or old hose pipe to keep the wire or string from cutting into the bark. Allow a little room between the stem and stake for growth. Two or three ties are usually sufficient, and these should be examined and loosened once or twice a year until the stakes can be dispensed with. The habit of putting in stakes in such a way that they cross the trunk, so that when the wind blows there is sufficient play for the stem and the stake to rub against each other is a bad one, the chafing often causing serious wounds. In exposed situations, or when there is danger of the tree rocking about and becoming loose at the collar, put in three stakes in the form of a triangle, the stem fitting in the space left between the three stakes at the top, while the bottoms of the stakes extend some 2 ft. or 3 ft. from the tree. For this purpose wires fastened to stakes driven in the ground are useful.

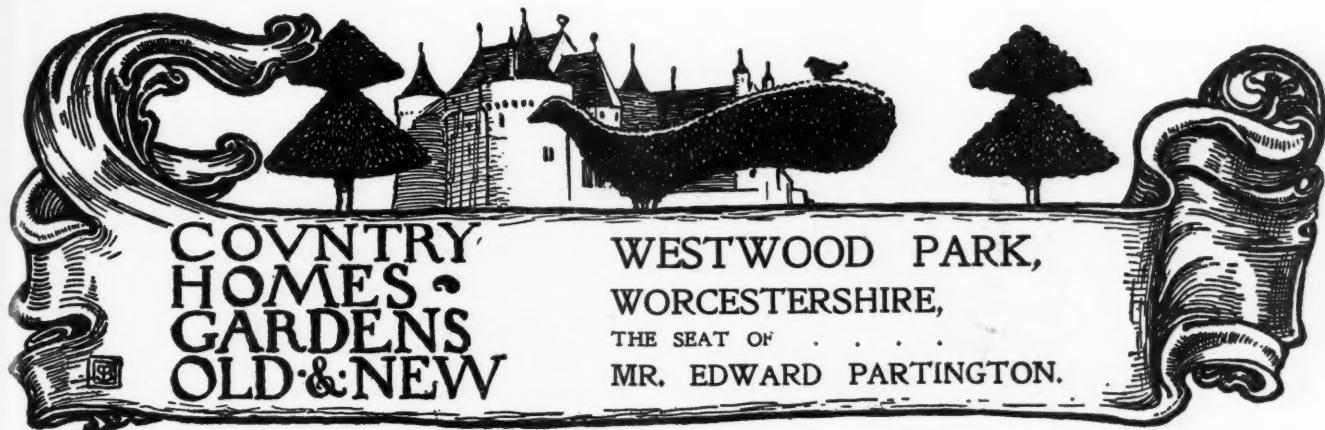
[Nov. 29th, 1902.]



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WESTWOOD PARK: THE PORCH.

'COUNTRY LIFE.'



WHETHER we regard Westwood Park from the historical, the personal, the architectural, or the gardening point of view, we shall find that it is an unusually interesting place. It has characteristics that are not discovered in many great seats, and it has been associated with not a few men of eminence in the State and Society. The house lies something less than two miles to the west of Droitwich, in Worcestershire, in a very fine situation, upon an eminence commanding very beautiful prospects, and its park covers about 208 acres, with a fine lake in view of the mansion on the east side. The park is laid out in "rays of planting," as shall presently be described. Here, in ancient times, was a small priory of Benedictine nuns, subject to the Abbey of Fontevraud, the site of which appears to have been upon the slope of the bank above the present fish-ponds, though Nash, the Worcestershire historian, tells us that the kitchen garden was the position. After the Dissolution, the place was granted by Henry VIII. to Sir John Pakington, a sergeant-at-law, who was given many judicial offices, chiefly in Wales, but whose family seat was at Hampton Lovett, in Worcestershire. The bluff King, whose portrait is enframed in the magnificent carving over the chimney-piece in the long gallery at Westwood,

enriched Sir John with not a few grants, for he stood high in the Royal favour, and knighted him after the return from Boulogne in 1545. When the knight died he possessed some thirty manors, and the greater part of his estate passed to his nephew, Thomas Pakington, the son of his brother Robert, who had been murdered in London in 1537. The new possessor was knighted by Queen Mary in 1553, and died in 1571.

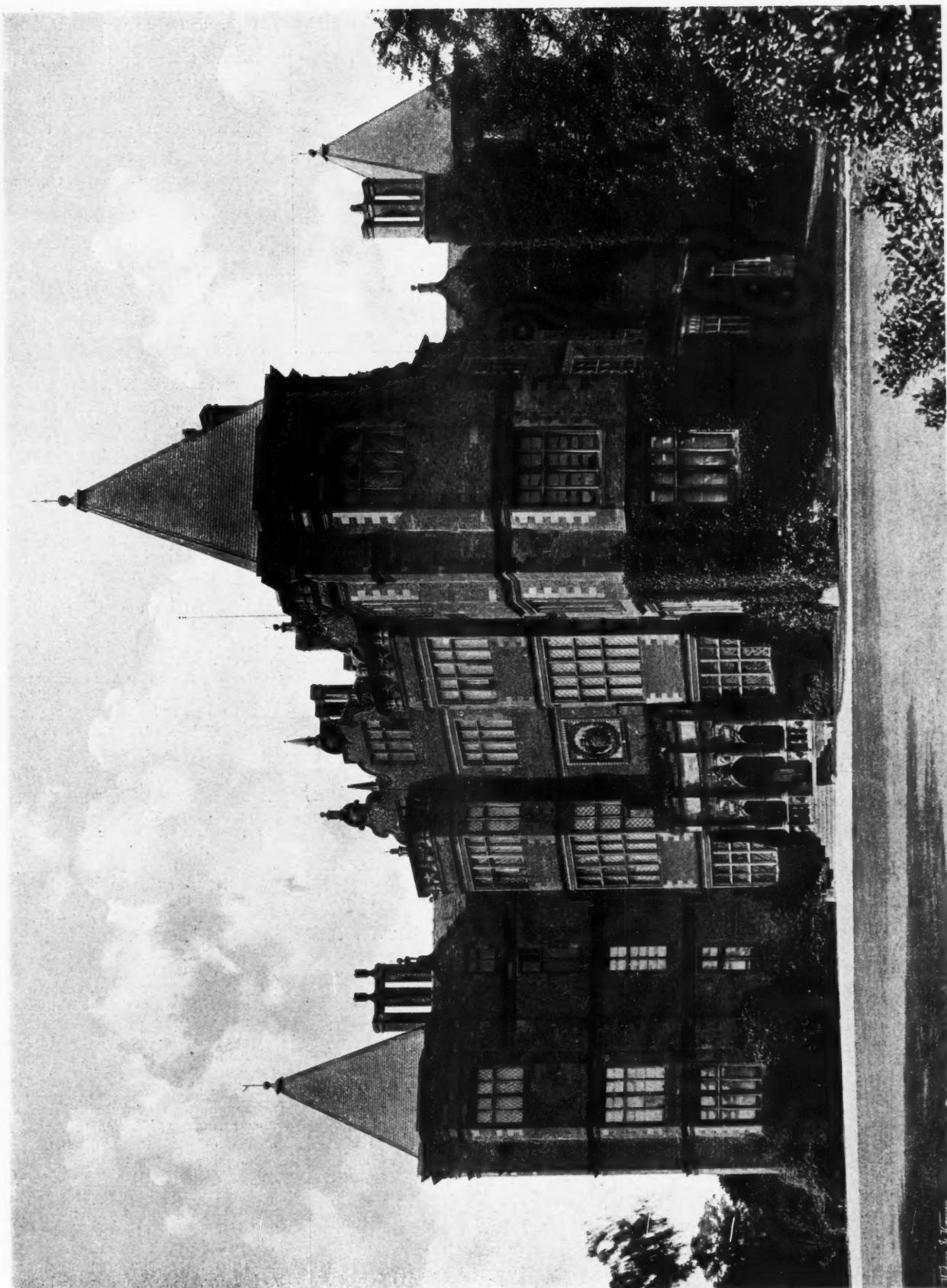
It does not appear to be known with any certainty that a mansion house existed at Westwood at the time, and the central block of the existing structure dates from the possession of Sir John Pakington, who succeeded on the death of his father, Sir Thomas. When Queen Elizabeth visited Worcestershire in August, 1578, she seems to have been attracted by the wit and the handsome person of the squire of Hampton Lovett, who had been educated at Christchurch, Oxford, and had studied the law at Lincoln's Inn. The Queen invited him to Court, where he was received with great favour, and plunged into the vortex of the fashionable life of his time. Elizabeth took great pleasure in his athletic exercises, and was accustomed to speak of him as "lusty Pakington." She had a kindly eye for the handsome man, and it is said that once, when he laid a wager with three other Court gallants to swim from Westminster to London Bridge—a feat which would not





THE WEST FRONT.

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THE SOUTH-WEST FRONT.

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THE CENTRE OF THE ROSE GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

astonish some of our modern champions—she forbade the match. Pakington was knighted in 1587, but he appears to have outrun his means and to have been enmeshed in financial difficulties. The Queen came to his aid, however, and he received a patent for starch in 1593, and was given the office—doubtless a rich sinecure—of bow-bearer of Malvern Chase. It is said, moreover, that she conferred upon him a valuable estate in Suffolk, but that when he went there and witnessed the distress of the widow of the former owner, he entreated the Queen that the property should be transferred to her. Thus appears to have been manifested the loyal and chivalrous spirit of the favourite, who thereupon retired to Worcestershire, and devoted his energies to improving his estate.

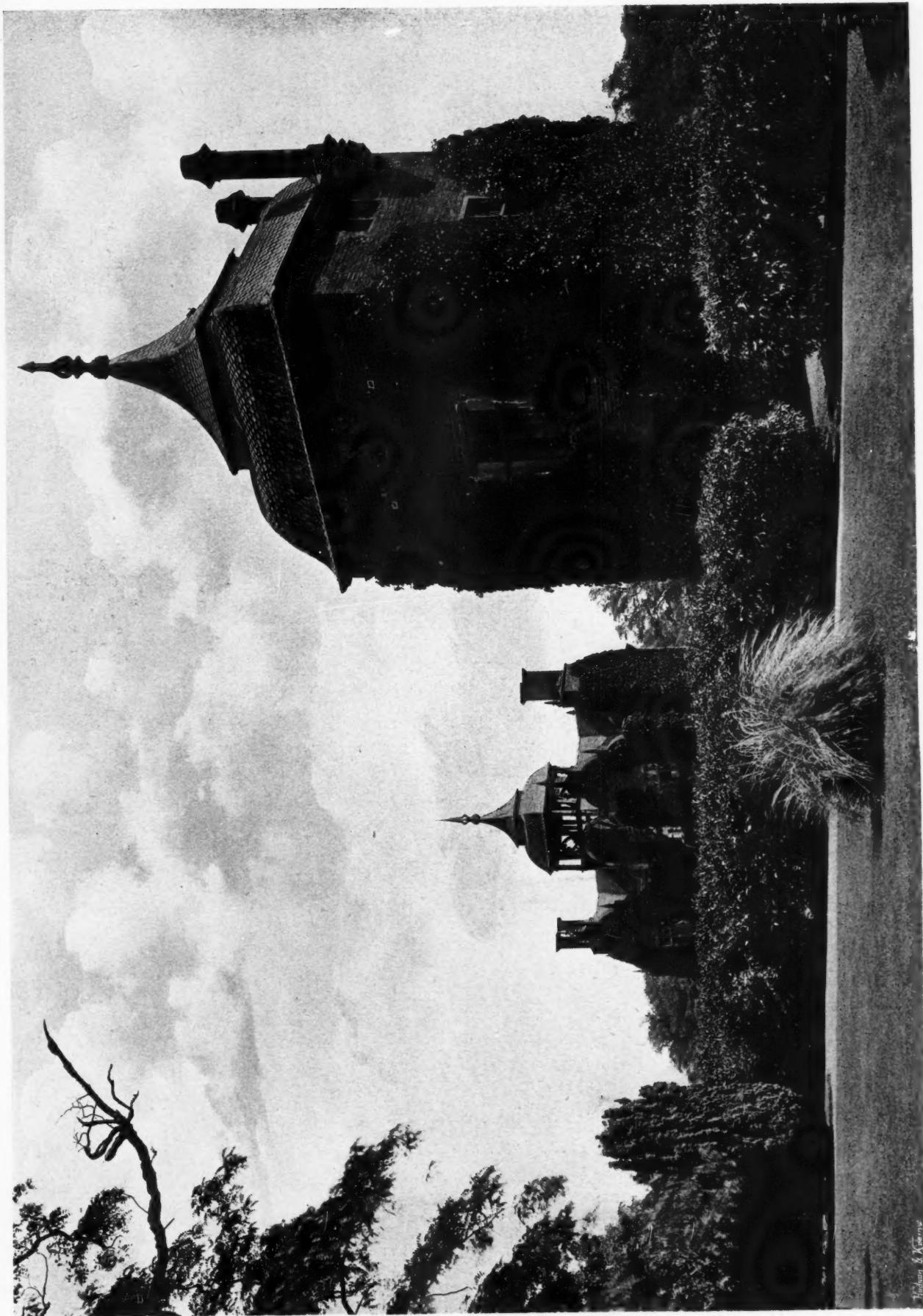
His residence was then at Hampton Lovett, but he appears to have conceived the idea of building a kind of banqueting-house or place of resort at Westwood. To him the central portion of the house is due, but it did not become the residence of the family until after the Civil War. It was a fine and excellent piece of work in the style of the time, and when all was ready, Pakington gave a great house-warming, at which the neighbouring nobles and gentlemen were hospitably entertained, though they were chiefly lodged at Hampton Lovett. We have the authority of Nash for saying that the house at Westwood was a lodge and banqueting-room only. It stood in the midst of a fine woodland, and Pakington constructed a lake, probably represented by the present sheet of water. His lake, however, encroached upon the highway, and his right to divert the road being questioned, he very impetuously ordered his embankments to be cut through, and his waters were dispersed through the valley, probably to the dismay of those who had opposed him. Sir John had married the daughter of Humphrey Smith, the Queen's silkman, widow of Benedict Barnham, and she had brought him a considerable estate, which enabled him to retrieve his fortunes. The marriage was not a happy one, nevertheless, for the lady had a shrewish temper, and it is recorded that in 1607 Pakington and "his little violent lady" parted upon foul terms. The quarrel continued, and in 1617, through the agency of the law, she procured his committal to gaol, but judgment went against her, and he was released. He died in January, 1625, and his widow was afterwards twice married—to the first Viscount Kilmorey and the first Earl of Kellie. A portrait of Pakington hangs at Westwood Park.

The knight was succeeded by his son John, who was created a baronet in 1620, and was M.P. for Aylesbury, in which district the family had estates. He died as a young man, and was succeeded by Sir John Pakington, the second baronet, who suffered much in the Royal cause in the Civil War, and to whom the present character of Westwood Park must be ascribed. Like his father, he was member for Aylesbury, but was disqualified in 1642, because he had put into execution the commission of array on behalf of the King. He was present at the battle of Kineton on October 24th in that year, and in March, 1645, voluntarily surrendered himself to compound for his estate. His difficulties were extremely great, and sequestration followed, but he was afterwards reinstated on paying

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COUNTRY LIFE.

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THE SOUTH GARDEN-HOUSE.

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THE LONG GALLERY.

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£3,000. He was still a staunch Royalist, and, obeying the summons of Charles II., was taken prisoner at the battle of Worcester, September 3rd, 1651, after which his troubles began again, and he was sent to the Tower. The Restoration, however, ended his difficulties, and he returned to his place among the Worcestershire gentry. His wife, the daughter of Lord Coventry, who far surpassed most ladies of her time in education and learning, was the reputed author of "The Whole Duty of Man." She was of a devout and religious temperament, and had strong sympathy with Dr. Henry Hammond, the eminent divine, and her house became his asylum until his death. It was the resort of many eminent churchmen — Fell, Henchman, Morley, Allestree, Pearson, Gunning, and others — thus becoming known as the headquarters of the Tory and old High Church party.

The house at Hampton Lovett had suffered heavily in the

Civil War, and the cavalier baronet transferred his residence to Westwood. The King came to his assistance, and a grant of £4,000 was made to him under the name of "Edward Gregory," as the King explained, lest the example should be prejudicial. It was at this time that Westwood received the four diagonal wings, which were built out from the original structure, giving it a form that appears to be unique. The arrangement presented some difficulties of communication between rooms, but the effect is excellent externally, for there are four great fronts all grand and imposing. The portico is an exquisite example of Renaissance work, and the details are extremely pretty and attractive; but the fluted Corinthian columns were originally the support of a balustrade, which was removed to make the top available as a balcony to the great saloon. Otherwise very few changes have passed over the structure. The noble bay windows rising to the

third storey, the quaint gables, and the striking character of the diagonal wings all mark out Westwood Park as an extremely fine example of the architecture of that time. The pyramidal roofs at the angles appear originally to have been even better than they are, for Nash makes them appear more lofty, and illustrates them with several little dormiers.

What is specially worthy of note is that Westwood Park does not stand alone. There is the grand and characteristic gatehouse, which may go back to the time of the first builder, with its admirable picturesque gables, its arch, and the delightfully fantastic character of the lofty structure which supports the cupola roof in the midst. At a little distance

from each wing, and lying in the diagonal direction from each corner of the house, stood most picturesque garden houses or banqueting-rooms, of which two still remain, and are admirable examples of garden architecture, their old brick walls, mullioned windows, quaintly corbeled chimneys, and picturesque tiled roofs giving them a most attractive appearance.

The site of the house upon an eminence in a wooded country doubtless suggested the distribution of the grounds, which are admirably illustrated in a bird's-eye view by Dr. Nash. The private garden seems to have been on the north-west, and to have been divided by paths crossing both ways, bordered by formal trees, into four portions, though not of equal size.



CHIMNEY-PIECE IN THE LONG GALLERY.

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Opposite to each angle of the house, and again opposite to each front, a way was cut through the wood, so that in each of these directions there was a vista and an avenue. A large circular space was cleared of timber round the house, and, at some little distance further away, a circular road intersected the avenues, so that the wood was cut up into segments of sylvan rings. It is true that the arrangement was not carried to completion on one side of the house, where the ground declined to the lake, and in this direction was a broader outlook, which gave variety.

This symmetrical plan of the garden at Westwood deserves to be specially noted. With its garden-houses and avenues the place had features that may be said to have brought it into relation with the school which we associate with Le Nôtre. It may even have anticipated him, but of this we are uncertain. As Mr. Sieveking says, in his charming book, "The Praise of Gardens," Le Nôtre's garden seemed made to exhibit to the utmost the social characteristics of the French people of the Grand Century: "They extend their houses into their gardens, which are necessarily architectural; open-air drawing and dining rooms are shown in their very nomenclature. Their groves are cut into Salons and Salles de Bal, their lawns rasés like their heads, and paths bien peignés like their periwigs; as lovers of the stage and drama, their very fountains must 'play' in their Théâtres d'Eau, and they kill time in open-air Circuses and Amphitheatres." Their avenues were cut through "curtains of foliage," and opened vistas into the country beyond. Something of this character is found at Westwood Park, though the garden-houses had their origin in earlier English times, and were more suited perhaps for diversion than the open-air salons of France.

Sir John Pakington, the cavalier baronet, died in 1680, and was succeeded by another Sir John, who spent a retired life at Westwood, and was reputed to be one of the finest Anglo-Saxon scholars of his time. He represented his county in Parliament from 1685 to 1687. Dean Hickes was his intimate friend, and appears to have written some of his learned works at Westwood. His "Grammatica Anglo-Saxonica" is dedicated to Sir John Pakington, and we shall be pardoned for quoting its description of the beauties of Westwood and its gardens and park at the time, as well adapted to the seclusion of the student: "Ibi porticus, atria, prophylaea, horti, ambulacra clausa et subdalia, recta et sinuosa, omnia studii commoda; ibi luci, silvae, nemora, prata, saltus, planties, pascua, et nihil quod animum pene a literis abhorrentem ad legendum, audiendum, et quovismodo discendum componere et conciliare potest."

The student baronet was succeeded by a worthy gentleman, another Sir John Pakington, who lived until 1728, and is supposed to have been the original of the famous Sir Roger de Coverley. It

is true that Addison disclaims having had any originals for his characters, but, although Sir Roger does not altogether answer to Sir John in the circumstances of his life, there are undoubtedly resemblances in the two personalities, and again in Coverley Hall and its surroundings, as resembling Westwood Park, with a ruined abbey near it, and its pleasant walks "struck out of a wood in the midst of which the house stands." Thus it is pleasant to associate Sir John Pakington with the first of Addison's genial society—the "Gentleman of Worcestershire, of ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley." What is quite certain is that Sir John Pakington is not known so much as the typical high Tory and Churchman that he was, as he is as the supposed original of the famous Sir Roger. Addison's baronet was a bachelor, but Sir John Pakington was twice married. Two of his sons pre-deceased him, but his third son, Sir Herbert Perrot Pakington, succeeded at Westwood Park as fifth baronet, and, like many of his ancestors, represented his county in Parliament. Sir Herbert's two sons—Sir John and Sir Herbert—followed him in succession, and the baronetcy became extinct on the death of Sir John, the eighth baronet, in 1830. The eldest daughter of the seventh baronet had married Mr. William Russell of Powick Court, and their son, Mr. John Somerset Russell, who on the death of the last baronet of the original creation had taken the name of Pakington in lieu of Russell, was himself created a baronet in 1846. This gentleman was a well-known politician, and was Colonial Secretary, twice First Lord of the Admiralty, and Secretary of State for War. He was made a G.C.B. in 1859, and in March, 1874, was



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A PROMINENT FEATURE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Nov. 29th, 1902.]

raised to the peerage as Baron Hampton of Hampton Lovett and of Westwood, Worcestershire. The present owner of Westwood Park is Mr. E. Partington. His son-in-law, Mr. R. B. Ward, resides there.

It remains now briefly to describe the arrangements of the interior of this singularly interesting house. Passing through the fine portico, a great hall is entered, some 60ft. long and proportionately high and wide, which is lighted by the transomed windows on each side of the doorway. The library and dining-room occupy the projecting wings. Parallel with the entrance front is the great staircase, extending from one side of the house to the other, and thus practically dividing it into two parts. It is of unusual design and very stately. The material is oak, and the newel posts terminate in elegantly curved Corinthian columns which support globes. It may be questioned whether these classic shafts are happily employed merely for this purpose, but the arrangement is interesting and characteristic. The staircase leads up to the first floor, where is a noble apartment known as the saloon, corresponding with the hall below, but loftier, and now having an elaborate ceiling in the style of the eighteenth century. Leading from this are the two withdrawing-rooms occupying the front wings, and above

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IVIED WALLS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the staircase is a long gallery, extending the whole width of the house, and very fine in its proportions and features. Beyond are the chapel and offices on the ground floor, with bedrooms above.

We said at the beginning that from the various points of view from which Westwood Park might be regarded, it would be abundantly interesting. We have seen that it is a magnificent example of Stuart architecture, grafted upon a Tudor structure—a mansion associated with many prominent people also. We have observed the peculiarly interesting features of its gardens and grounds, affording quite a typical example of a particular manner of the gardener's art. The historical interests of the house, as they are related to the personalities of its owners, are many. It is thus a mansion that may well claim the regard of Englishmen, as illustrative of much that is notable in the history of the country, belonging to a period in which extraordinary zeal was shown in the building of great houses and the formation of large estates.



THE STAIRWAY.

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"COUNTRY LIFE."

*IVIED WALLS.*

"COUNTRY LIFE."

ON THE GREEN.

WINTER seems to be coming on, that is, if we are to take frost and a low thermometer as any sign of it—we have long ceased to look on the calendar as any indication of the seasons—and golf is a poor game, except on the seaside links, in frosty weather. It comes rather *apropos*, therefore, that Messrs. Henderson, the booksellers of St. Andrews, should have published just now the little book containing the new rules of golf. As I had the honour of being one of the committee that framed these rules, naturally it would be improper if I did not regard them as the best code that ever has been, or that ever will be, made. On the other hand, I do not expect everyone to regard them exactly in that light, but perhaps it is not too much to expect that the consensus of opinion will allow that they are better rules than any that have gone before. We have tried to learn by past mistakes, to conciliate past contradictions, to profit by past criticism, given with a liberality that has been really something more than generous. And yet the committee—I speak for myself at least—is but human; it is possible there still may be something not quite perfect. Will the golfing world, I wonder, credit us at least with the merit of having done our best? It is a credit they never seem to have given us hitherto. And yet it does not appear much to ask. It is an excellent act of Messrs. Henderson to have published this booklet now, for the rules do not come into force till New Year's Day, and the interval will give time to us all—both to the over-worked committee and to the grateful public—for learning, and if possible understanding, the rules we have framed.

The committee of the Professional Golfers' Association has addressed a petition to the committee of the Prestwick Golf Club, on whose links the open championship will be played next year, as well as to other influential people, saying that whereas—this is the appropriate language of petition, as it is generally understood—the India-rubber-filled ball, although more pleasant to play with, does not, in the opinion of the Professional Golfers' Association, demand as much skill in golf as the gutta-percha ball, the petitioners

humly pray (they do not word it themselves with quite such humility) not that the ball to be used in golf shall be standardised, but that its material shall be defined, and that only "gutty" shall be used in the open championship competition. The petition, at least, is much to this effect. It is not quite easy to perceive what is meant by "standardising"—terrific word, by the way—unless it be "defining." But if we all are to play with the same material (gutta-percha), why not define for us the amount we are to use also—that is to say, the size of the ball, and so forth—and likewise the weight of clubs, and the wood they are to be made of? There seem to be plenty of rubber-filled balls in the market now, so that no one need say he cannot get them.

It is very bad news that poor Mr. "Johnny" Bramston has to go to a warm winter climate, having developed serious weakness in the chest. His loss to the

Oxford University side is a very heavy one, although he never has quite fulfilled the promise that he showed at the time the amateur championship last was played at Sandwich. I think he must have established a record there by twice, both morning and afternoon, getting to the green of the Suez Canal hole in two shots, and from a pretty far back tee. Mr. Robb beat him eventually, after a very tight match, in that championship. It was, I think, the first competition of such importance that Mr. Bramston had taken part in, and the prolonged strain told on him, naturally enough. Possibly the constitutional delicacy that has become so seriously pronounced is the reason that he has not yet shown quite the form that his play at that time led one to hope from him. But he has lots of time before him, and when he comes back fit and well, as he should do with the good wishes of all golfers to help him, we may expect big things of him.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

SHOOTING AT GRANTLEY, RIPON.

VALLEY shooting has always a peculiar charm. But it is not often, except in the North, and not in every district there, that it can be enjoyed in such perfection as at Grantley. Two deep and wooded valleys join above Grantley Hall, running down through the estate, and forming two separate countries, as it were, for shooting. They lie between Ripon and Pateley Bridge, in some of the most famous all-round shooting ground in Yorkshire. It was purchased by Sir Christopher

Furness from Lord Grantley, and adjoins Lord Ripon's estate, the Spa Ghyll shooting on which was, by his Lordship's permission, illustrated in COUNTRY LIFE last season. The two valleys are formed by the Skell River and the Hungate Beck



W. A. Rouch.

THE GUNS.

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wedged themselves. Seen from above, or halfway up the sides, the narrower parts of these valleys are wild in the extreme. Trees and rock plants, heather, fern, and self-sown timber are mixed with the more formal plantations. Pheasants are



W. A. Rouch.

DUCK SHOOTING BY THE HALL.

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particular fond of roaming about among the warm slopes and sunny crags.

Some way up the valley lies the Eavestone Lake. This is surrounded and overhung by woods rising high above it. Above these woods, again, rises the Pickhill Fell, dividing the Eavestone water from the Skell Valley. The lake is full of good trout. Now, by the excellent addition of wild duck to the objects of modern preservation, it holds a large head of these birds, which can be driven to the guns at the lower end of the lake simultaneously with pheasants from the woods on its banks. But this is not the only large area of water. Lower down two long and narrow lakes extend above and below the Hall, from which ducks are driven both ways to the guns. The general plan of operations, as will be seen from the plan annexed, is to shoot up the valley to the woods surrounding Eavestone Lake. The woods below do not lie so conveniently that everything can be brought forward continuously from one to the other, but fall into two main divisions. Those at the Grantley Hall end of the valley, with their adjacent coverts, are worked together, with the ducks on the two lower lakes coming in as part of the shooting. Then the upper woods are driven forward towards Eavestone Lake, and the latter with the surrounding coverts brought back again. The combination of wood and water shooting is a very attractive and unusual feature here, and one which is most suggestive to owners of ground of a similar character elsewhere.

The day's sport of which by Sir Christopher Furness's kind permission the photographs here reproduced were taken, began at 10 a.m. on November 3rd by two duck drives from the lakes which lie above and below the Hall. The birds follow the course of the river connecting the lakes, but rise high, as is seen in the pictures, above the house and trees. The lakes are a mile or more long, and the duck being scattered over them come in detachments, and from a distance, flying fast, and giving plenty of shooting. The scene of duck shooting by the Hall shows the first stand of the day. The duck are coming over from the upper pools to the lower lake. The gun on the left is Sir Christopher Furness. The next duck drive, here illustrated, is back from the lower lake over the park; the bird in the centre is hard hit and just falling to Lord Ripon. Duck shooting on this scale demands specially good retrievers. Many of these dogs which are excellent with partridges or pheasants are by no means so good with water-fowl. This is not matter for surprise, for the ways



W. A. Rouch.

RETRIEVING A DUCK.

Copyright



W. A. Rouch.

OUTSIDE WILKE'S WOOD.

Copyright



W. A. Rouch.

ON THE BROW.

Copyright

of wounded duck and wounded game birds are very different. A winged duck will swim at once to the nearest reed-bed, or dive instantly and swim under water to shelter. There it remains below as long as it can, and when no longer able to do so, just allows the tip of its beak and nostrils to appear above water. It is not easy for any dog to first find and then seize a bird which is practically invisible, but the Grantley retrievers are excellent



W. A. Rouch.

THE TOP GUN.

Copyright

at this work. They find their bird quickly and catch him either on or just below the water with equal certainty. Probably retrieving dogs of various kinds were first used in gathering wounded and dead wild duck. Dr. Caius, in his "English Dogges," says that they were also expected to pick up the cross-bow bolts or arrows which had been fired at the ducks and missed them. But that our modern retrievers should so quickly learn the aquatic side of their business is highly creditable to the innate cleverness of this modern but most useful breed.

Pheasant shooting then began in settings and surroundings of the most beautiful character. The day, too, was fine and clear, aiding the shooting, and incidentally making photography possible and satisfactory. The steep banks and woods, with the fells beyond, formed a panorama too extensive perhaps for illustration by the camera, but most charming to the eye. The whole of the shooting of the lower coverts had to be completed by luncheon, and was carried out on the lines shown in the plan. Sunny Bank Wood, a larch plantation behind Grantley Hall, was the first covert taken. This wood is of considerable size, as will be seen from the plan annexed, and has two adjoining coverts, including Oilman Wood, which are driven with it. The guns have some crossing shooting here as the birds go forward in the way seen in the illustration of Lord Ripon killing a crossing shot. The main covert is then driven out towards Miss Launder Wood, and this in turn is driven back again across the valley. Wilke's Wood is taken next, and the birds are sent up the valley towards the Eavestone Lake and woods, to remain there until after luncheon. It will be noticed that a group of coverts on high ground up the valley had hitherto been left untouched. These coverts are Quarry Wood and its annexes under Pickhill Fell. The walk to Quarry Wood is through pretty lanes, bordered with oaks and fern, and the woods are extremely beautiful and wild. Mr. Rouch's admirable photographs explain the scenery better than words, though the great horizontal scale in which stretches of landscape present themselves in photography does not suggest wholly the vertical scale, including the steepness of slopes and the height of trees. The scene above Wilke's Wood gives a key to the general landscape, but omits the water, which is such a feature of the later shooting. "On the Brow" shows birds coming in a high wind over some typical Grantley scenery. "The Top Gun" is some hundred feet or more above the bottom gun, and

the crossing pheasant with the wind behind him will need some stopping. After Quarry Wood was shot the luncheon interval marked the end of a most successful morning's sport. The afternoon was then devoted entirely to shooting the woods up the valley round Eavestone Lake. The lake is long and winding. On every side rise the steep banks covered with wood. The coverts on both banks were brought forward down the valley, ducks and pheasants coming over in greater or less proportion, according to the nearness of the guns to the lower ground and the course of the beck. This brings all the birds back to Fothergill End Wood, which is the stand of the day. It terminates on the steep brow of a hill, and the pheasants come out very high, very steadily, and very fast, rising to a considerable elevation before they reach the line of guns at all.

At Grantley Sir Christopher Furness possesses an almost ideal shooting estate. It is also extremely well managed, and its all-round capabilities are made the most of in every way.

SHOOTING NOTES.

THE FOOD OF YOUNG GROUSE.

WE have to acknowledge and thank the writers for the following interesting letters, in response to an enquiry made in the "Correspondence" column of COUNTRY LIFE regarding the food of young grouse. The writer suggested that heather buds might not be either the sole or the staple food of very young grouse, and that this might account for a good grouse season when the heather was undoubtedly frosted early.

"SIR.—In reply to the question as to what, in my opinion, young grouse feed upon, I have no hesitation in saying that, like ourselves, they prefer the best, and failing that, nature and example make them take to the next best, in other words, the very small tops of the just visible young heather, which, by the way, does not suffer so much from frost as it does when it is a trifle older; then if that, owing to non-burning or frost, is not to be had, grass seeds of various kinds are eaten. Insects, which swarm in the neighbourhood of the heather roots, are eaten also. The grouse, being a healthy bird, changes his diet frequently, otherwise how is it that at the time of the berries he is found on some moors out of all proportion to the ground stock?—A. MACKINTOSH OF MACKINTOSH."

"SIR.—My employer, Lord Henry Bentinck, has asked me to furnish you with the information you require about the food of young grouse. In 1898 I reared eighteen young grouse by hand, and in 1899 I reared a few more. During the first month of their existence insects formed the chief part of their food. I spent a lot of time with those I reared in 1898; I shifted them on to different sorts of ground, and I may venture to say that I spent weeks along with them, watching the different things they ate. I found out that



W. A. Rouch. SIR CHRISTOPHER AT QUARRY WOOD STAND. Copyright

they ate many kinds of grass and herbs; there is a small-leaved clover, abundant here, which they were particularly fond of; they were also partial to the leaves and the bloom of the bilberry, also the flower and leaves of the sorrel, and when they came across any heather they had a few picks at it. Very seldom they ate any grass seeds, only bent seed, of which they were particularly fond. The bell heather they very seldom ate; if by chance they did so it was only the bloom. They also ate mouthfuls of dry powdery peat soil; I claim to be the first to have found out this. About the

first of June the spittle insects make their appearance here, and continue for about six or seven weeks; my young grouse devoured thousands of them. At first I thought that it was the froth that they were after, but by watching them closely I found out that it was not the froth, but the insects concealed in it; they appeared to be drinking the froth, instead of which I found out that they were only feeding for the insects, but they cannot get the insects without swallowing some of the froth. I found out by taking my young grouse over a lot of ground where other insects were more numerous than they did not meddle with the spittle insects. Young grouse in the wild, I feel certain, never meddle with the spittle insects, because they can find plenty of other insects, as they roam over a lot of ground in a day; without exaggeration I may venture to say that my young grouse picked up fifty insects for once they picked at anything else. Young grouse are great eaters; from daylight till dark they are almost continually eating. I forgot to say that I took a hen and coop and eight young grouse away into the moor a mile from here when they were three weeks and three days old. I moved the hen and coop every day for fifty or sixty yards. Sometimes I fed them with groats, once and sometimes twice a day. A hawk killed one, but the other seven all lived to maturity. I should have no fear in rearing a lot on a moor in this way, providing I had a hut and gave them the same attention as is given to pheasants. Moving the coops fifty or sixty yards each day, so that they could find plenty of insects, would be about all they required in the way of food; they would rear themselves if changed to fresh ground often enough.—WILLIAM PRIOR, gamekeeper, Deeside, Dent, Sedbergh, Yorks."

BEATING A BIG WOOD.

In discussing problems of the beating of different coverts for pheasants, one often hears the question asked, "What is the best way to deal with a large wood?" There is really only one answer to this question: "Cut it up into small woods." Practically speaking, for the purposes of covert shooting there is no use in a big wood. The best of coverts are small, not larger than ten acres or so at the outside, so disposed that birds can be driven from one to another. The ideally best coverts are small ones on the two sides of a valley, the covert on neither side reaching down to the lowest line of the valley; and with two hanging coverts of this kind facing one another you may drive birds backwards and forwards from one to the other, every bird coming high over the guns, "till the cows come home." But, of course, it is not very much comfort to the man who asks you what he had better do with a big wood in a flat country to reply by expatiating on the ideally best disposition of coverts in a country quite different from his own.

Neverthe'ess, it may at least give him a hint of the lines on which his efforts should be directed in the arrangement of his own less ideal covert. If you have a big wood to deal with, the best thing to do with it is to treat it as to make its conditions approximate as nearly as may be to those of several small woods. The position of a proprietor differs a great deal in this regard from the position of a tenant. The former can do what he likes with his own, and generally the best solution of the trouble in this case is to cut broad glades—not rides; pheasants will run across the rides, and even if you stop them by nets from running, the guns will have to shoot them so close that they give no sport; but if you can cut broad glades, of 50yds. wide or so, and put the guns back on the far side of the glade, it is possible that the birds, seeing the guns, may rise high enough to give good shots. This is the simplest and most obvious plan, and generally it can be carried out without the sacrifice of fine trees, for if the trees are really fine ones they can hardly be so close together as to make shooting impossible, provided the leaf has fallen. Of course this is an heroic remedy, but the case of a big wood is one that calls for heroic measures. It is hardly possible, however, for a tenant to adopt them, unless his lease is long and his landlord unusually reasonable and accommodating.

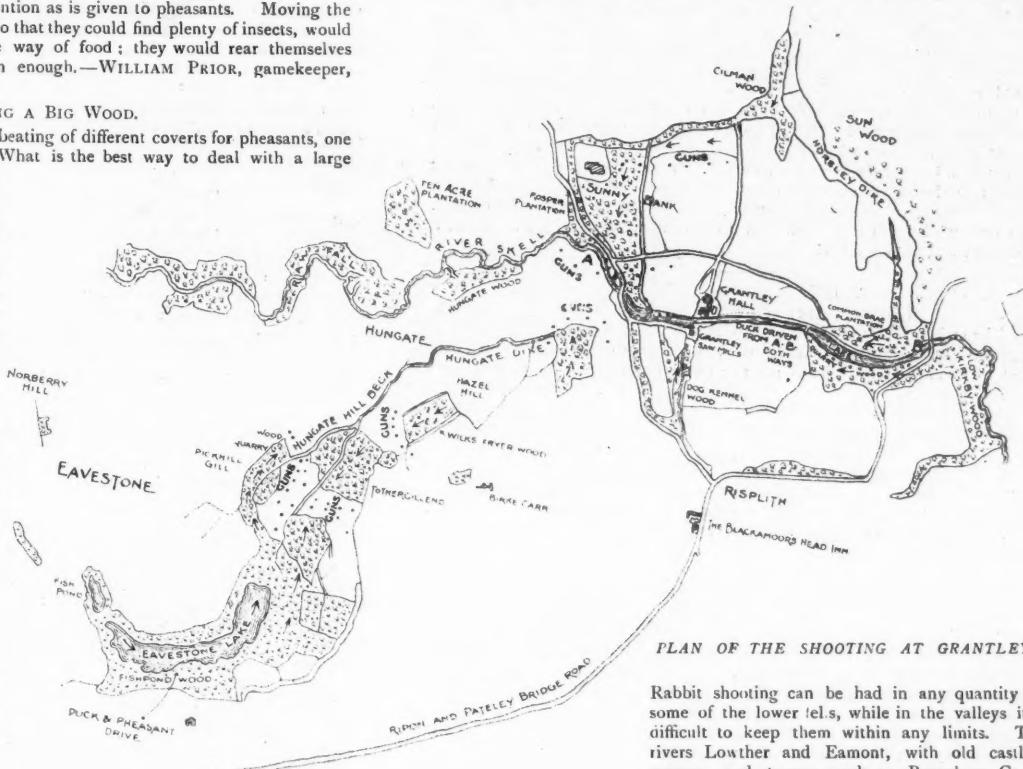
When, as a tenant, it is not open to you to follow such drastic courses, then probably the best to be done is to observe in what parts of the outsides of the wood the undergrowth grows most thickly, there to encourage its further growth by planting and protection from rabbits, and if necessary to supply artificial covert by means of fir boughs thrown in heaps, or what you will. Added to that, you will take every opportunity of thinning out the covert from the part of the wood surrounding, on the inner side, this thicket, so that when you once have the birds in the thicket they will take wing when beaten out of it, and may rise over the heads of the guns. The great principle is, that birds will run through covert, but will fly over a bare space. If you can get your thicket big enough, it may be worth while to station your guns round its edge while you beat towards it, but as a rule you will find it a better policy to subordinate a few beats entirely to the object of filling up the thicket with birds, shooting only those that try to break out or break back, so as to get a relatively good rise out of it. If the covert permits it, and the wood is large enough, you may have two or three of these thickets, from each of which you may bring the birds back over the heads of the guns to the firs in the middle of the wood, where, most likely, you will be in the habit of feeding them. If you succeed in thinning out the covert surrounding the thicket, you should leave a channel, so to speak, connecting the thicket with the main wood, so that the birds may run down this into the thicket. When the serious shooting begins, you must, of course, have a stop in this channel to prevent the birds from running back by the way they have come, and you always will need a few stops round the outsides of your thickets to prevent the birds from going off altogether.

Something in the way of cutting up a big wood into sections may be done with nets—you can always stop birds from running in this way—but it is not in itself a means of getting them any height into the air. Some such policy,

however, as is suggested is infinitely a better answer to the problem of dealing with a big wood than the futile plan we see sometimes of narrow rides across which an immense proportion of the birds run and the remainder fly over at height that makes them dangerous to shoot and a mangled mass when shot. If such rides are used they must be netted; they cannot be sufficiently closely stopped to prevent the birds crossing and recrossing them at pleasure and getting beyond all control. But at best a big wood is a bad job, and the best to be made of it is to approximate it as far as possible to a number of small woods.

THE LOWTHER ESTATE AND SHOOTING.

The immense territorial possessions of Lord Lonsdale in Westmoreland and Cumberland lie mainly between the Lake Mountains and the valley of the Eden, having for their northern boundary half the breadth of the county. Whole mountains and fells, including some of the most famous moors of the North, are included in them, and every kind of game, from grouse and blackcock on the fells, to wild duck on the lakes and snipe on the low ground, abounds. For miles the whole line of the river Eamont, which drains Ullswater and falls into the Eden at Eden Hall, permits admirable low-ground shooting, where the partridge and pheasant seem equally natural products of the soil.



PLAN OF THE SHOOTING AT GRANTLEY.

Rabbit shooting can be had in any quantity on some of the lower fells, while in the valleys it is difficult to keep them within any limits. The rivers Lowther and Eamont, with old castles, manors, and towers, such as Brougham Castle and other typical old Northern homes on their banks, make a most romantic centre to the deep valleys and long lines of shaggy woods in which the Kaiser and his suite were shooting. The soil is red sandstone, the climate mild, and the general surroundings those of a much finer and grander Devonshire.

MOVEMENTS OF HAres.

As a rule hares are very much given to keeping to exactly the same ground. This is especially the case in parks and enclosed land. Where there are a number of small fields the same hare will lie for weeks by day in the same field. He uses the same gaps, and feeds in the same meadows or turnip fields. This is the strong argument for keeping up a stock of hares in a park, for they are protected there, and know it. They are so quick at learning where they are let alone that half-a-dozen hares may be found in one field on a preserved estate, and not one on the next field which has no keeper to look after it. But there are more ways of getting rid of hares and making them leave ground than by shooting them. They very much dislike wire netting. A large wood formerly full of hares and a great resort of those from all round now holds practically none. It has been elaborately netted to keep the rabbits in, and though there are two sides on which there is little netting, the hares have left. Even where rabbits are wired extensively to keep them down, and hares are nominally let alone, they move off elsewhere.

On open ground, where a large stock of hares lie over a wide area, they are less local. In the winter considerable movements of hares take place, determined very largely by the wind. Rough weather will clear off the hares from miles of exposed ground and send them over to the leeward side, where they will lie in turnips or under the shelter of woods until the equinoctial rains once more clear them out by the drip from the leaves and send them elsewhere. Hares will not remain in a wood while the leaf is falling. Probably the constant noise and rustle of the leaves, acorns, chestnuts, and the like make them nervous, and unable to hear an enemy approaching. In one of the great frosts of 1892, when the Thames was frozen, they crossed the ice in large numbers from well-preserved land to ground not stocked with hares on the other bank, and quite replenished the neighbourhood with ground game.

KEEPERS' DOGS, OLD AND NEW.

A discussion on the subject of modern bulldogs has lately taken place in the pages of a contemporary. In it the view was taken that the bulldogs now bred for the show bench are not of the old type at all, and that this is only preserved by French breeders, who had a fancy for possessing "bulldogues" before ours had degenerated or been exaggerated into the animals of to-day. Without going into the arguments *pro* and *con*, we may note that the old English bulldog still survives in a few places as a keeper's dog. It was used for this commonly enough until the milder code of game laws rendered poachers less desperate in avoiding capture or detection. The keepers then took to

breeding dogs not to bite and maul their opponents, but to throw them down. For this the heavy mastiffs used to-day as keepers' guards, and generally muzzled, are big enough.

Looking at one of the survivors of the old bulldogs still used in Norfolk as a keeper's dog, the formidable character of the old breed was very striking. They were rather tall on the leg, with a thin tail carried almost straight out behind. The head was round and the jaws strong, but not underhung in the ridiculous fashion of to-day. Activity is the special character of these dogs, instead of the sleepy somnolence of those seen now.

[All enquiries under this heading to be addressed to the Shooting Editor.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

GOLF BALLS.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was very pleased to see that the committee of the Professional Golfers' Association have taken up the subject of what the golf ball should be made of for ordinary golfing purposes, also for match play. I, like many others, find the game quite expensive enough now, without a ball being introduced that is to cost from 2s. 6d. to 4s. It means that the golfer who does not feel disposed to indulge in the extravagance of these expensive balls must be content to play just the ordinary game with some friend who does not wish to indulge in extravagance. He may be just as good a player as the extravagant man, but he cannot enter into any competition, because he knows he will be outdriven by his opponent using the new ball. There is not the least doubt that a strict rule should be enforced (now that these expensive balls have been introduced) that a ball made of gutta-percha only should be used for match play. Why should we English always adopt American principles? Golf, I believe, is an old Scotch game.—W. J. E.

A QUESTION OF WORDS.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The erring printer who makes you in the letter about four-horned sheep in your last issue say "fine Momad shawl;" when your correspondent no doubt desired to write "murrat," leads me to raise a small but interesting point in the etymology of this word which has puzzled enquirers. Murrat or mourat, says Mr. John Forbes of Inverness, in his catalogue of Shetland goods, is a shade which varies from light tan to dark brown, and he might have added to chocolate and cocoa browns; it is peculiar to the Shetland sheep. I take it here is another word we Scots have got from the French. Both mourat and the antique word "murrey," known still in heraldry, came from the Latin *morum*, a mulberry, and denote that fine tone between claret and chocolate; the fawn and tan colour, that is, the pale shades in the natural sheep, are less properly called "murrat," therefore.—MENIE MURIEL DOWIE.

WHAT IS UNWOMANLINESS?

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—"An Unwomanly Woman" strikes a true note in this controversy. It will be conceded as a broad principle that no honest labour can be regarded *per se* as either unmanly or unwomanly. The only condition to be taken into account is whether the capabilities of the individual are fitted to the special kind of work for the time being under consideration. Therefore if it is womanly to stand twelve hours at the wash-tub (which really is hard labour), it cannot be seriously regarded as unwomanly if the same woman takes a spell the next day at raking and tossing hay—which is certainly a more sanitary occupation both in regard to the more varied muscular action involved, and to the general environment of the worker. Speaking from personal experience, there is a wide difference between loading hay and raking or tossing the same. The former is only to be undertaken by healthy and muscular men; the latter is well within the powers of an ordinary country girl or woman. Indeed, she is much more fitted for this work than the average city clerk or shopman. Wherein then does the manliness or the womanliness of the occupation lie?—W. G. CRESWELL, M.D.

A CURIOUS STONE.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have been wondering whether your readers ever saw anything so curious in the shape of a stone as that seen in the accompanying photograph, which I took the other week, coming across this quaint subject in a country lane near Knowle Green, in Lancashire, on the Longridge Road. It is a stone over 8ft. in length embedded in the hedge, and on making enquiries about it I found it had lain there for years, no one caring to remove it. It bears the following inscription in deeply cut characters: "Rauffe Radcliffe laid this stone to ly for ever A.D. 1655." Rauffe Radcliffe was at that time owner of the estate, but why he laid the stone is a mystery, and, needless to say, it is regarded with superstitious awe by the people of the country-side. No one ever attempts to move it, for once, in years gone by, a farmer did so, and used it as a rubbing

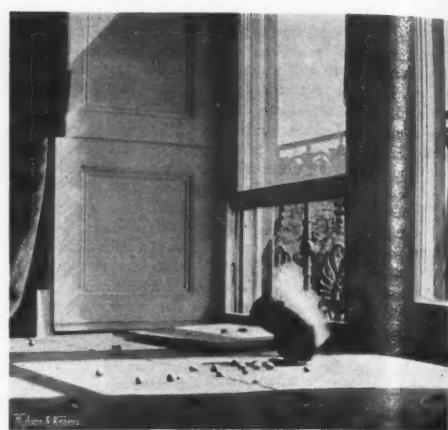
stone for his cattle, but the beasts on using it uttered such fearful sounds, and such weird sights were seen after dark, that the old gaffer was glad to replace it where Rauffe destined it to "lie for ever."

—ESPERANCE.

A TAME SQUIRREL.

[To the EDITOR.]

SIR,—I think some of your readers may be interested in the photograph of a squirrel which is so far tame as to come into the room on the second storey and sit and eat nuts on the floor. I fancy it is unusual for squirrels to do so, but I have three who do this—never together, however, unless to chase one another out. They seem very jealous.—L. S. A., Dumfries.



CONCERNING COTTAGES.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I notice in your issue of November 22nd a paragraph quoting an enquiry you have received from a correspondent asking for plans of a cottage of four rooms to cost about £150. I think architects ought to be honest enough to say that no such cottage could be built for anything like that amount. It is only jerry-builders that can do such things.—C. F. A. VOYSEY.

[Mr. Voysey seems unaware that eighteen-pence a week is the average rent paid by agricultural labourers (*vide* the report made to the Board of Trade by Mr. Wilson Fox). How to provide decent cottages at that rent is a problem to be faced, and we regret that he merely relegates it to the jerry-builder.—ED.]

ARE STOATS USEFUL TO FARMERS?

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have just discovered that two stoats have taken up their quarters in a hayrick in the vicinity of my poultry yard. As I have a good many valuable birds, I immediately gave orders that the intruders should be destroyed. What was my surprise to learn that my bailiff had a rooted objection to this, and apparently with some reason on his side. He stated that last year a pair of stoats lived all the winter in the same hayrick, and that, although the fowls were constantly scraping about in the stackyard, not a single one of them had been touched. Further, he said that when the wheat stacks were threshed out only one large rat was seen, whereas in former years hundreds had been killed. This aspect of the case was quite a new one to me, and I shall be much obliged if you, or any of your readers, can give me any information as to what the staple food of a stoat is, and whether it is safe to allow this pair to live in the neighbourhood of my prize fowls? If I could do so with safety, I would very much prefer to leave the little creatures undisturbed, for I had the pleasure of watching them during a game of romps. They played just like a pair of kittens, and their quick graceful movements were exceedingly pretty. Another question which occurs to me is whether my game-preserving neighbours would approve if they knew that I was giving an asylum to a pair of stoats, for I have no doubt they do a good deal of harm in coverts when the young birds are about and they have a family to rear.—MORAYSHIRE.

HOW TO MAKE A BIRD-TABLE.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your reply to "F. S. C." in your delightful number for November 1st, on "How to Make a Bird-table," has interested me much, and I hope you will allow me to enumerate various other articles of food which our dear little feathered friends greatly appreciate. In addition to those mentioned by you—viz., cocoanut cut in halves, lumps of suet or cheese, opened walnuts and almonds—I give them, suspended from a trellis arch, which I have had purposely made to fit into my window, lard, cake crumbled up small, bread-crumbs (which are somewhat despised by the greedy little mortals after their other luxuries), and I never omit water. All these I have in small fancy china cups or vases, easily obtainable at most china shops, with brass chains attached. In severe frost I find the cup containing the water sometimes cracks, so this winter I am trying an empty half cocoanut. Up to the present there has not, of course, been enough frost to hurt anything. I also find a mutton chop bone much approved of. My one difficulty is this—and perhaps you could suggest a remedy—I find

greenfinches and sparrows are equally partial to the hempeast, and what annoys me about them is, they do not act as do the dear tomtits—viz., take a seed and fly away to crack it on a neighbouring tree or twig—but they sit and gorge on the edge of the cup; I should not grudge them even this, but they never attempt to fly away, but continue sitting and drop all the husks into the cups. Then when the tomtits arrive on the scene they find it hard to discover the whole seeds in the midst of the débris of the husks. I tried to baffle them by covering the entire cup with fine wire, cutting a hole in the centre just large enough for the tomtits' heads, but too small for the larger and more clumsy ones of the greenfinches and sparrows. But this has had no effect. Ours is only quite a small town garden, but few would credit, who did not see them, the many kinds of birds that come to my window—three kinds of tomtits, robins, wrens, sparrows, greenfinches, linnets, thrushes, also a beautiful bird with a long bill and a bluish-grey breast tinted with crimson; it has only come twice, and seems very wild, whereas the tomtits are very tame. Then on the little lawn below are blackbirds, starlings, chaffinches, and even crows, etc.—a perfect bird paradise, or rather it would be so but for our neighbours' cats, who defy even broken glass laid along the walls.—M. G.



FORESTRY IN LONDON PARKS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am extremely glad you have dealt with this important subject. London will owe a deep debt of gratitude to COUNTRY LIFE if your plea for wiser treatment of our trees prevails. During the last few years our London forestry has been going from bad to worse, not only in the parks, but elsewhere—witness Canon Henson's deplorable vandalism outside Westminster Abbey—while even in private gardens, such as those of Devonshire House and Lansdowne House, neglect and ignorance reign supreme. The County Council and societies like the Metropolitan Gardens Association have done their utmost, but it is in the Royal parks that irretrievable damage is being wrought. Much needless lopping has been done in the Mall, probably for the convenience of spectators of processions, as I noticed big branches being lopped off fine trees in full leaf during the summer months. This was done in the early morning. One of the worst examples of lopping will be found in the row of plane trees on the park side of the asphalt walk leading from the Duke of York's Column to the Foreign Office. These handsome young trees were in admirable condition till side branches and leaders were mercilessly cut back last year. This spring, in place of the original leading shoot, six or eight subordinate shoots appeared, each striving for the mastery, and making the top of the tree look like a broom. These were in turn pruned back, and the natural graceful line of growth is lost, there being an ugly bulbous wound where the first pruning took place. The plane tree requires very little pruning. Where such a course is necessary the lowest branches should be removed close to the stem, instead of clipping all the branches at the ends. The course usually adopted of trimming them to look like toys from a Noah's Ark is ridiculous. Good specimens of young trees which have never been mutilated can be seen surrounding the equestrian statue at Constitution Hill and outside the garden wall of the Prime Minister's house on the Horse Guards' Parade. In Lord Windsor's Office of Works has now got a chief from whom attention to these subjects can confidently be expected.—X. Y. Z.

A FOREST WAIF.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I suppose this is scarcely to be called a village type. The photograph is that of one of the poor old people who make some sort of livelihood by collecting the unconsidered trifles of the forest. He had, as a matter of fact, been



gathering rushes on a raw, frosty morning, wading for a great part of the time up to his thighs in icy cold water. Of course, he wore no stockings. Out of the rushes are fabricated whips for children, which he sells at inn doors. So do people live in the "forest fair."—G.

HYBRID CROWS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your column headed "Wild Country Life," in your issue of November 15th, the writer, in mentioning the fact of hybrid carrion and hooded crows, states that because we are not "familiar with every stage of intermediate variety between the all-black carrion crow and the grey-bodied hooded crow," therefore these hybrids are infertile. Seeböhm, however, found these hybrids breeding together in Siberia, and took young ones from the nest, thus proving that some of these hybrids, at any rate, are fertile. And in the Natural History Museum is a large case in the Central Hall showing specimens of every intermediate variety between the carrion crow and the hooded crow, collected by Seeböhm in Siberia. He, therefore, comes to the conclusion that there is only sub-specific difference between them, and suggests that the name of the hooded crow should be *corvus corone*, var. *cornix*. In Seeböhm's "History of British Birds," Vol. I., will be found a full account of his experience

of these hybrid crows in Siberia. I am glad to see your writer protest against the killing of the rarer spring migrants to the British Isles; but I think it is a very great mistake not to discriminate between the spring and the autumn migrants. The rare spring migrants come here to breed, and if left alone would stand a good chance of establishing themselves as regular breeding visitors, as not only the old ones, but their young progeny, would doubtless return year after year when the breeding season came round, and so we should soon have the pleasure of having golden orioles, hoopoes, honey buzzards, and perhaps some few others, fairly common every summer in the South of England. But the autumn migrants are altogether different. "E. K. R." in the article I have alluded to proves, and quite rightly, I think, that a large element of chance enters into the autumn migration of birds. And the very fact of autumn migrants being so rare here, proves to what an extent the element of chance has on their flight, this country being quite out of the way of their proper line of flight. Take the example of the little bunting, whose death lately "E. K. R." so much deplores. This bird winters in the Far East, in China, Burmah, Assam, and that part of the world. The bird which was shot here was therefore blown, by a chance wind probably, clear away from its proper route of migration. It is therefore manifestly absolutely hopeless ever to imagine that such a species could become a regular British species. The lesser grey shrike, again, which I shot in Norfolk last month, and to which "E. K. R." regrettably alludes, is a most unlikely bird ever to establish itself as a regular migrant here, as its proper winter quarters are in South Africa, and by rights it ought to be there now. But by some accidental chance it found itself in England, and if it had not been shot during its stay here, it would probably never have come here again during its subsequent career. As it is, it would doubtless soon have wandered all the way down the East Coast, crossed the Channel, and ultimately found its way down to Africa. So the chances are remote that it would have crossed the path of any ornithologist during its short stay with us to whom it would have given pleasure to watch in a living state, and who could have recognised it from a great grey shrike, even with strong field-glasses, especially as it was not in adult plumage. I see not the slightest harm in obtaining rare autumn migrants, and should never scruple to do so, and should be only too glad of the chance of getting such rarities as waxwings, pine grosbeaks, many waders, gulls, and ducks, rough-legged buzzards, etc.—not that the latter are so very rare, as a certain number come over here every autumn from Scandinavia, where they breed and are common. But I would never shoot a rare spring migrant, as these, and these alone, would be likely to establish themselves in this country, and ought to be given the chance so to do.—GEORGE E. LODGE, 5, Thurloe Studios, Thurloe Square, S.W.

HAINAUT FOREST.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your comment on the proposed acquisition of part of Hainault Forest, you refer to it as an addition to the forest of Epping, and to the argument which some have employed that that open space is sufficient for the needs of the East End. Will you allow me to correct you to this extent, that the proposed new space is several miles from Epping Forest, and on quite a different line of hills. It would serve especially the great townships growing up at such an extraordinary rate along the Ipswich line, a population which cannot readily get access to Epping Forest. It must also be remembered that from the point of view of London, means of communication are improving every year, and Londoners like to have the opportunity of varying their excursions. The proposed space comprises a considerable wooded area, and also 500 acres of land at present under the plough, but formerly forest. I will, if you will allow me, on a future occasion invite the opinion of your readers as to the best methods of treating this area, and restoring it to a condition suitable for the recreation of the people.—E. N. BUXTON, Knighton, Buckhurst Hill.

BUILDING BYE-LAWS IN RURAL DISTRICTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Sir William Chance's suggestion to form an association for the purpose of agitating for the repeal of the unsuitable bye-laws at present in force in many rural districts is an excellent one, and I hope something may be done to realise it. If regulations are required in rural districts other than the powers given to local authorities under the Public Health Acts of 1875 and 1890, the Model Bye-laws for Rural Districts, recently issued by the Local Government Board, might be applied over the whole country, and the others now in existence be withdrawn. These new bye-laws seem to cover the whole ground on which regulation is necessary or desirable, and no one can, I think, take reasonable objection to their provisions. Before these were drawn up and issued, however, Rural District Councils in all parts of the country had obtained *urban* powers, with the sanction of the Local Government Board, and had framed bye-laws based on the Local Government Board's Model Bye-laws for Urban Districts. If these bye-laws could be withdrawn in rural districts and the new ones substituted, further agitation would be unnecessary. It would be interesting to know whether this could be done by a Provisional Order (?) of the Local Government Board, or whether an Act of Parliament would be necessary. I understand that some of the more enlightened Rural District Councils are of their own accord substituting the new bye-laws for the old, and if all the others would follow this example we should have no further cause for complaint. Unfortunately, however, all District Councils do not see matters in this light, and still insist on enforcing the urban restrictions in purely rural districts. In the course of my architectural practice I have had recent experience of this. A client of mine in one of the southern counties had bought a number of old cottages grouped together in a small hamlet, some of which were falling to pieces and really unsuitable for human habitation. His idea was to improve the cottage accommodation in the district by pulling down the worst of the old cottages and putting up new ones which, while being well-built, should be also pleasing in appearance. Being a business man, he also wished to see some reasonable return on his outlay. On enquiring I found that the District Council a year or two previously had issued very elaborate and most unsuitable bye-laws full of unreasonable and expensive restrictions. I wrote to the surveyor and asked if, in view of the recent issue of model bye-laws for rural districts, his Council would be willing to consider plans which conformed to the regulations there laid down. The reply I received was to the effect that the Council would insist on their own bye-laws being strictly adhered to. The consequence is that my client has been put to a good deal of unnecessary expense in connection with the few cottages which he eventually decided to have erected. These are neither better built nor more sanitary than they would otherwise have been—they certainly have not gained

in external appearance—and I doubt if any more are likely to be erected for some time to come, as the return on the capital expended works out at a ridiculously low rate. As a contrast to this, in an adjoining district where there are no bye-laws in force, I have been able to make a very healthy and comfortable cottage for my own use out of an old timber barn by merely lining the interior with brick and putting in the necessary windows, doors, ceilings, etc., and this I have done at quite a moderate cost. I have also been able to build cottages and houses at a reasonable expenditure, which will yield a fair return on the outlay, and are healthy, sanitary, and pleasing in appearance. None of these could I have successfully accomplished had I been hampered by the unreasonable bye-laws in force in the district first referred to.—ROBERT WEIR SCHULTZ.



to save his life. He weighed 40lb., and was 5 ft. 10 in. long and 1 ft. 8 in. in girth.—ROBERT L. NEWMAN, Dartmouth, South Devon.

POLETRAPS AND OWLS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Self-interest on the part of landowners and game preservers, apart from all question of cruelty to animals, demands the instant abolition of the poletrap, which, although happily less frequently met with than formerly, still remains on certain estates—a hideous spectacle, a remnant of barbarity in this enlightened twentieth century—placed upright in many a smiling and peaceful hedgerow on game preserves. Many parts of England, especially where there are rivers and large woods, are devastated by rats. Nothing on the farm, no root, no grain or fruit, is safe from their ravages. Rats destroy the young of partridges, pheasants, ducks, geese, and hens, and devour all eggs they come across, besides undermining many a handsome building by eating their way into the strongest foundations. In large towns rats do some good by acting as scavengers, but not so in the country, where they are unmitigated pests. The owl is the natural enemy of the rat, the check kindly placed by Nature on its ravages. A famous German naturalist tells us that in 706 pellets of the barn owl which he examined were found the remains of no less than 2,525 rats, mice, shrews, bats, voles, and only twenty-two small birds, chiefly sparrows. Instead of preserving such useful and inoffensive birds as the owls, gamekeepers generally have orders to destroy them, with the lamentable result that they are rapidly diminishing in numbers. It is said that poletraps are set to catch hawks and other destroyers of young pheasants, and not for the capture of the owl or any other bird; but after much observation on an estate where poletraps exist, I have come to the conclusion that for every hawk caught there are at least five owls. No bird with the habits of the owl can possibly flourish within a league of a poletrap, because the characteristic of this bird while in pursuit of its prey is to perch upon any solitary post of vantage that presents itself. I myself have often beheld with pity and indignation the beautiful horned owl—a bird becoming only too rare—which is so interesting from every point of view, and which is so useful to the farmer—hanging head downwards, with a look of anguish and terror in its large round eyes, with tendons all lacerated and bleeding and nearly eaten through by the cruel trap in its persistent efforts to free itself, to perish by inches in unutterable agonies, or to be despatched on the tardy arrival of the gamekeeper while going his rounds. People who raise a clamour against physiologists, whose plea is that they carry on the practice of vivisection for the progress of knowledge, for the good of mankind, and for the benefit of animals themselves, while taking care that the creature under operation has all pain destroyed or subdued by the extirpation of the brain or by anaesthetics, a practice also which is under careful legal supervision, would do well to turn their attention to the barbarities of the poletrap, which serves no useful purpose, which has no such excuse to offer for its existence, and which inflicts untold and prolonged agonies on beautiful and harmless birds. Let them form an anti-poletrap league.—JOYCE H. COMBE, Hadnock Court, Monmouth.



SUMMER SEA-FISHING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

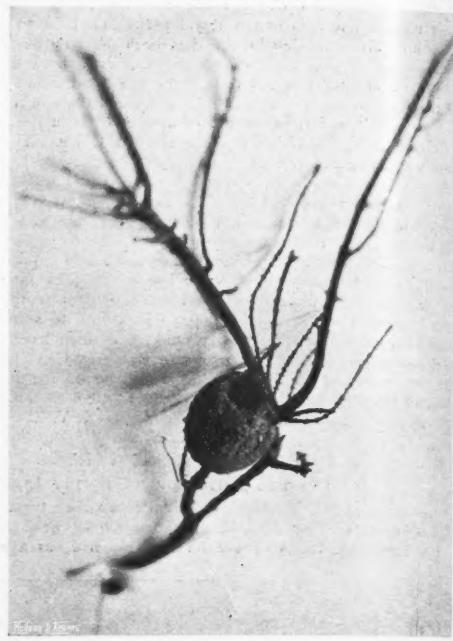
SIR,—I ought, perhaps, to have mentioned in my recent article on "Summer Sea-fishing," although I did not think it necessary at the time, that the pilchards caught were foul-hooked. The statistical matter detailed there is perfectly correct, and, as your correspondent infers, probably the catch is a record which will take a considerable effort to equal.—ALFRED BURDEN.

[Mr. Burden has privately sent us the name of the angler referred to in his article, and, though not meant for publication, it is entirely satisfactory as to the authenticity of the statistics criticised by our correspondent.—E.D.]

NEST OF A SOLITARY WASP.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I send you herewith an illustration of the nest of *Eumenes coarctata*, very unlike some of the fine nests of birds you have interested us in, but eminently fitted for its own purpose. This solitary kind of wasp, which is thus specialised to distinguish it from the well-known community of wasps which devour our fruit, is very local in the South of England, and not too common. Its exquisite nest (shown here full size) is constructed of well-worked mud, and attached to the dried sprigs of heather; it is destined to contain one inmate, the female wasp placing her egg in the nest, which she has stocked with larvae of caterpillars for its delectation when hatched out. An eminent entomologist of Dorsetshire tells me he has often bred out the wasp from such a nest, and also caught it on the wing on our heaths. The wasp constructing the nest is quite small, something under $\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length, and black with light splashes of yellow. I hope you may think the matter of interest, so rarely is this solitary species alluded to by writers on the wasp family.—E. K. PEARCE, Bourne-mouth.



CAT & DOG.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I should be glad to know whether any of your readers have ever come across a case of a dog and cat hunting together. The case in point is not vouched for by me, but I am most emphatically assured by the owner of the animals in question that the facts are as stated. My friend owns a black and tan Dachshund and a small black half-bred Persian cat; she lately resided on a farm owned by herself and a friend. The farmhouse stood on the road, and across the road in an adjacent meadow lay a small rabbit warren, in full view of her bedroom window. The delinquents (I fear it was a case of poaching) together would proceed to the warren which the cat entered, while the dog stood guard over the bolt-hole he most fancied. My friend several times saw a rabbit bolted, but did not see any captures. I have never heard of a case of this kind, and should be glad to hear of anything similar.—H. S. L.

A GAY GOSHAWK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—When I wrote to you before it was about merlins, so now perhaps you would like to hear about a goshawk. My father had it sent to him by a friend in April, and since then he has taken great care of it, and trained it to catch rabbits, although it seems to prefer to go for birds. The Prior, for that is his name, is not as well mannered as the dear little merlins, for he is always frightened at dogs, and bates off the fist when he sees them coming too near. I think he must have been attacked by a dog once, and so dislikes them very much. He will come to me for food quite readily, especially if I put on my father's cap. It is very interesting to see the goshawk go in and out of the bushes after a rabbit that he has missed striking in the open. Sometimes, when he is very keen, he will jump right into a bush with such force that it is difficult to get him out, and the branches have to be cut away. He is fed on sheep's heart, rabbit, pigeon, and sometimes a chicken's head and neck. Once a week he gets a gorge—that is to say, he is allowed to eat as much as he likes. After a gorge his crop sticks out a good deal. He is very lazy next day, and does not eat much. I have in an outdoor aviary twenty-four doves and seven foreign birds. Whenever the goshawk is carried past them he looks as if he would like to have a few. I enclose a photograph of the goshawk.—FRANCES L. GARDNER.

THE PILCHARD CATCH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I ought, perhaps, to have mentioned in my recent article on "Summer Sea-fishing," although I did not think it necessary at the time, that the pilchards caught were foul-hooked. The statistical matter detailed there is perfectly correct, and, as your correspondent infers, probably the catch is a record which will take a considerable effort to equal.—ALFRED BURDEN.